Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-96-031 *14 February 1996*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Egypt-Saudi-U.S. Efforts To Mend Syrian-Palestinian Ties

NC1302154496 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 10 Feb 96 p 1

[Report from Gaza by Tariq Hasan]

[FBIS Translated Text] Senior Palestinian sources have confirmed that Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United States are currently exerting intensive efforts to mend Palestinian-Syrian relations. Hoping that these efforts would lead to positive results soon, the same sources referred to the importance the Palestinian side attributes to having normal relations with Syria at this delicate stage.

The sources told AL-AHRAM that the Egyptian and Saudi efforts in this regard stem from the two countries' belief in the need to have a balanced Arab position toward Israel to serve the Arabs' strategic interests. According to the same sources, the U.S. is trying to promote some kind of discussion between Syria and the Palestinian Authority [PA], but the Syrian side seems to be preoccupied at the moment with its negotiations with Israel.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Cairo Seeking al-Asad-Mubarak-'Arafat Summit

TA1302164796 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 12 Feb 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MANAR has learned that Cairo is holding contacts for convening a trilateral summit in the Egyptian capital with the participation of Yasir 'Arafat, Husni Mubarak, and Hafiz al-Asad. Informed sources say that Egyptian-Palestinian and Egyptian-Syrian contacts were held recently for this purpose.

The sources stress that the chances of convening this summit are good and that it is expected to be held in Cairo after the 'Id al-Fitr holiday. The main topics on the summit's agenda will be the Arab-Israeli negotiations, mutual relations between the three countries, and the plots that are reportedly being hatched against Iraq and its territorial integrity. The sources expect that high-level Egyptian envoys will visit Gaza and Damascus to promote the idea of the summit.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 9 Feb

NC1302115596

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 9 February edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL- SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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1. Rights Groups Report Restrictions on Freedoms, Press
2. Labor Party Leader on Press Law, Assembly, Israel, Islam
3. Journalist Harassed for Revealing Deal by Minister's Son
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9. Columnist Regrets Attempts To Amend Palestinian Charter
10. Government Warned Against Involvement in Anti-Sudan Schemes

RIGHTS GROUPS REPORT RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOMS, PRESS

This edition of AL-SHA'B leads with a 600-word story on the annual report of the Human Rights Legal Assistance Center [HRLAC]. The annual report calls for revoking press Law No. 93 of 1995 and urges a speedy government acceptance of the alternative draft law prepared by the Journalists Syndicate. The report is cited as stating: "The HRLAC noticed a growing government inclination to impose further legislative and actual restrictions on the freedom of opinion and expression. The most serious of these restrictions was Law No. 93 of 1995." The human rights group notes that scores of journalists and writers, mostly from the opposition, were interrogated or tried in 1995 under the law.

—In an unattributed 300-word article on page 8, the newspaper cites another "semi-annual" report by the HRLAC in which the human rights group sees "retrogression in human rights and basic freedoms due to the continuing application of the emergency law and other extraordinary laws and the expansion of the cycle of violence." The HRLAC report also notes "the escalation of the armed confrontation between the government and the Islamic groups and the government's insistence on adopting legislation that would weaken and confiscate legal and constitutional guarantees and reduce the margin of democracy." The group's report views government "expansion of the cycle of confrontation to include the Muslim Brotherhood" as "the most serious de-

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velopment," noting that 83 Muslim Brotherhood members were referred to military courts. The group reportedly condemns the sentences passed by military courts against 54 leading Brotherhood members.

—The newspaper publishes on the top half of page 2 approximately 3,000-words of excerpts from "the newest" report issued by the Egyptian Human Rights Organization on the trial and questioning of journalists under Law No. 93 of 1995. The excerpts detail the cases of several journalists, oppositionist and progovernment, who were tried or interrogated under the new press law. The rights group describes the judicial applications of Law No. 93 of 1995 as "tough on the freedom of expression," noting that the sentences passed so far range from two years in prison with hard labor to a 50,000-pound fine.

LABOR PARTY LEADER ON PRESS LAW, ASSEMBLY, ISRAEL, ISLAM

Page 8 features two reports of 1,000 words each, one by Tariq 'Abd-al-Hamid and the other by Jamal Imbabi, on remarks by Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri at popular rallies in Alexandria and al- Mansurah. Shukri reportedly told the al-Mansurah rally that Press Law No. 93 of 1995 "will not terrorize us; we will never surrender." Shukri noted violations of the Constitution stating that Islamic shari'ah is the main source of legislation. He is cited saying: "Violations of Islamic shari'ah are numerous, manifested primarily in television programs and in some death sentences." Shukri contends that Egypt and the Arab and Islamic nations are under tremendous foreign pressure aimed at creating division and facilitating Israel's domination of the region. He notes that Israel possesses nuclear weapons and that Eritrea occupied a Yemeni island "with Israeli assistance." Casting doubt on Egypt's undisputed sovereignty over Sinai, Shukri says: "Sinai is still full of so-called multinational forces, mostly American." He adds: "There is no real presence for the Egyptian Army there." He asks: "How can that be reconciled with talk about Sinai's reconstruction? How can Sinai be reconstructed amid these forces, the early warning stations, and the nuclear warheads?" In his remarks in Alexandria, Shukri stresses that the opposition will keep trying to bring down the new People's Assembly. He urges active popular moves to correct the situation.

JOURNALIST HARASSED FOR REVEALING DEAL BY MINISTER'S SON

'Ali al-Qammash writes an approximately 3,500-word follow-up report on page 3 on a real estate deal involving Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi's son 'Adil. Al-Qammash's first report on the deal appeared in the previous issue of AL-SHA'B. The new report details some ownership documents and legal disputes and notes threats and irregularities. It asks where young 'Adil al-Alfi got all his millions to buy six high-rise apartment buildings in Alexandria and claims "negligence by the interior minister."

—In an unnatributed 150-word report on page 1, the newspaper says that following the appearance of the previous edition of AL- SHA'B, in which 'Ali-al-Qammash revealed the news of 'Adil al-Alfi's real estate deal, al-Qammash received telephone threats and indecent telephone calls. He was also stopped by five policemen who asked for his identity card and asked him about his house and the nature of his work for AL-SHA'B.

MAJDI HUSAYN BANNED FROM GIVING LECTURE IN ASYUT MOSQUE

According to an unattributed 300-word report on page 1, the security forces on 6 February prevented Majdi Husayn, the newspaper's chief editor, from giving a lecture at the mosque of the Islamic Charity Society in al-Qusiyah in Asyut. The report says security vehicles surrounded the mosque and prevented traffic and passers-by from entering the street leading to the mosque. Security officers also accompanied Husayn on his train journey from al-Qusiyah to Cairo "perhaps to make sure that he would not return to al-Qusiyah or go to any other city in Upper Egypt." With this report, the paper publishes a picture of a police vehicle. The caption reads: "In al-Qusiyah the armored vehicle directs its machine guns to the entrance of the mosque while the street is deserted of pedestrians."

—A 180-word report on page 8 cites the Egyptian Human Rights Center for Strengthening National Unity as denouncing the Canadian Consulate's refusal to grant Majdi Ahmad Husayn an entry visa to Canada as a violation of the most fundamental human rights.

RATIFICATION OF SENTENCES AGAINST MUSLIM BROTHERS CONTESTED

A 300-word report by Dawud Hasan on page 1 says the team of lawyers defending 20 Muslim Brotherhood leaders sentenced by the military court filed a new suit at the Administrative Judiciary Court contesting the ratification of the sentences by the president of the Republic and the defense minister. The defense calls for the release of the convicts. The defense maintains that the ratification of the sentences was "gravely illegitimate," rendering it null and void.

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LAWYERS CONTINUE TO PROTEST SEQUESTRATION DECISION

A 200-word report by Khalid Yunus on page 1 says that lawyers in all the governorates are collecting signatures to hold a general assembly "to confront the sequestration" decision against the Lawyers Syndicate "and to renew confidence in the Syndicate's Council," which is dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood. The report says the Lawyers Syndicate branches will hold an emergency meeting next week to adopt a unified position on the government's decision to take control of the Syndicate and declare rejection of any encroachment on the Lawyers Syndicate and its role.

ARAB-ISLAMIC PARTIES CONDEMN TUNISIA, JORDAN FOR ISRAEL TIES

A 350-word report by Rif'at Sayyid Ahmad on page 1 cites two "important" statements issued this week by the Democratic Revolutionary Arab Dialogue Forum [multaqa al-hiwar al-'arabi al- thawri al-dimuqrati], "which groups about 100 Arab and Islamic parties and organizations, including the Labor Party." The first statement condemns the normalization of ties between Tunisia and Israel. It says Tunisia's establishment of diplomatic representation in Israel "is a flagrant challenge and strong provocation of the sentiments of the Arab nation and of hundreds of millions of Muslims." The statement urges Arab and Muslim masses to close ranks and resist normalization with Israel. The second statement condemns the arrest and trial of Jordanian activists for their rejection of normalization with Israel. The statement names Jordanian activists Layth Shubaylat and Fahd al-Rimawi and notes that the regime in Jordan is "tightening the noose around the parties and popular organizations that resist normalization."

—In another, 150-word, unattributed report on page 1, a statement by the Tunisian Ennahda Movement is cited condemning the Tunisian Government for raising the level of ties with Israel. The statement says the Tunisian move fails to respect the minimum level of official Arab solidarity and weakens the position of Lebanon and Syria and the position of the Palestinians in the final negotiations with Israel. The statement charges that the Tunisian Government, with this step, is defying the will of the Sudanese people and their political and national forces. It says the move shows despotism and a lack of democracy in the country.

ERITREAN PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO ISRAEL VIEWED

In a 350-word article on page 8, Tal'at Rumayh says the Eritrean president's recent visit to Israel again shows Israel's influence in Eritrea and its role in the occupation of al-Hanish al-Kabir Island. The writer maintains that creating alliances with countries around the Arab world is an old Israeli policy to besiege the Arab nation. He says that Israel, by provoking the al-Hanish dispute, sought to promote its plans for a Middle East that brings together the Arab world, Israel, and other non-Arab countries. Noting that the Eritrean president's visit to Israel came after the UN Security Council resolution against Sudan, the writer says Eritrea is expected to play an important role in implementing the resolution.

COLUMNIST REGRETS ATTEMPTS TO AMEND PALESTINIAN CHARTER

In a 600-word article on page 7, columnist Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah discusses the battle over the Palestine National Council's Charter. He regrets a Palestinian statement that the Palestinian Authority will try to amend the Charter before the early Israeli elections to help Shim'on Peres win. The writer says that canceling the Charter "will be nothing, but a symbol for Palestinian concessions and Zionist victory."

GOVERNMENT WARNED AGAINST INVOLVEMENT IN ANTI-SUDAN SCHEMES

In a 6,000-word article on pages 5 and 8, Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn discusses the recent Security Council resolution against Sudan, warning Egypt against joining the United States and others in their attempts to impose sanctions against it. Husayn begins by challenging the Egyptian Government's claim that Sudan is involved in terrorism against Egypt; he blames the violence on government policies and practices. "You are the ones who are carrying out terrorism and expanding its cycle," he tells the rulers of Egypt. He maintains that violence and terrorism in Egypt cannot be encouraged and promoted by foreign countries if there is no internal resentment and frustration. "We must not forget for a moment that those who are carrying out martyrdom-seeking operations are Egyptian youths. What drove a group of Egyptian young men to this level of despair and hatred? This is the problem you should address." He says police efforts alone will not uproot the violence and armed opposition in the country. For violence to stop, he says, "the doors to democratic reform must be opened."

Husayn maintains that the campaign against Sudan started when it became clear that the Sudanese leadership was committed to Islamic shari'ah and when it adopted a "courageous position against the U.S.-Israeli scheme that targeted Sudan and the region." Husayn then reviews contradictory Egyptian positions and statements on Sudan in recent years. He notes, for example, that Egypt accused Sudan of deploying Iraqi missiles

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during the Gulf war and of trying to demolish the High Dam in Egypt, only to retract these statements later. "The art of lying in our official media to slander adversaries in Egypt and the Arab world is a skill our rulers have mastered," he says. In this regard, Husayn also reviews past Egyptian "lies" about Libya and cites NEWSWEEK and THE WASHINGTON POST saying Washington played a role in creating tension between Egypt and Libya. Husayn suggests that Egyptian "lies and threats" against Sudan likewise proceed from Egyptian "subordination" to American schemes.

Husayn laments Egypt's going as far as to "get involved in the issuing of a Security Council resolution threatening sanctions against our people in Sudan." Just as Egypt's name and weight were used to cover "the aggression" against Iraq, he says, Egypt is being used to cover the "aggression" against Sudan. Rejecting this aggression by "the arrogant states," Husayn says "collusion or cooperation with the enemy of God to carry out this aggression is religiously prohibited." He discusses the importance of and need for strong, eternal ties between Egypt and Sudan. He says: "Our life and future are organically linked with Sudan's. It is in our firm and certain interest that Sudan remain united inside its current border." He maintains: "The Security Council resolution threatens the unity of Sudan and the [Egyptian] Government should reconsider its position." He sees foreign schemes to divide the country and weaken the central government. He says the two months the Security Council gave Sudan to extradite three suspects will be used to intensify conspiracies and military pressure against the Sudanese Government and he urges the regime in Egypt "to end its bizarre alliance with the United States, Britain, Ethiopia, and Israel against Sudan in the next two months."

Husayn praises recent statements by Defense Minister Husayn Tantawi in which he reportedly emphasized the eternal bonds between Sudan and Egypt and said Egypt is doing its best to prevent international sanctions against the Sudanese people. Addressing the Sudanese, 'Adil Husayn says: You are resisting Satan. You are stronger. The Egyptian people will never let you down and Egypt will never serve as a staging point for the enemies' aggression against you.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Secret' PA-Islamic Jihad Talks Under Way

TA1402121796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Colonel Ahmad 'Id, the Palestinian military commander of the Bethlehem region, said today that he has no information regarding the arrest of two Islamic Jihad activists in Bayt Jala while supposedly on their way to perpetrate a terror attack in Jerusalem. Our correspondent Hanan Schlein reports that Col. 'Id was referring to reports in Israel that two Islamic Jihad members were captured with explosives wrapped around their bodies.

At the same time, senior Islamic Jihad sources have revealed that the organization is holding contacts with the Palestinian Authority [PA] to forge an agreement. Our correspondent in the south Eli Bohadana reports:

[Begin Bohadana recording] Just like it is doing with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the PA is trying to appease the militant Islamic Jihad organization and find channels of communication with it to prevent clashes which have already led to bloodshed. The confrontation between the parties reached its peak two weeks ago, when the Palestinian security forces killed two Islamic Jihad activists in the al-Shati' refugee camp. The Islamic organization considered the incident a declaration of war, and its men warned that they would seek revenge against the PA.

PA head Yasir 'Arafat immediately ordered that a joint PA-Islamic Jihad commission of inquiry be set up to examine the affair. This collaboration has, in fact, started a channel of comprehensive communication between the parties.

Shaykh Nafidh 'Azzam, a leading Islamic Jihad member in Gaza, revealed today that secret negotiations are being held in a bid to forge a comprehensive reconciliation agreement and, if you will, a cease-fire agreement. At the same time, the shaykh stressed that if an agreement is reached, it will not be binding on the military arm of the Islamic Jihad. The significance for Israel is clear.

PA sources, however, tend to believe that just having a dialogue is a good beginning for further bolstering 'Arafat's rule, which will have an impact on Israel as well one way or another. Either way, the Israeli security forces are taking no chances, and the closure on the territories continues. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Said To Set Conditions for Charter Change

JN1402114196 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 9 Feb 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian sources in Cairo say that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat told U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher that three conditions should be met for the amendment of the Palestinian National Charter before the premature Israeli May elections.

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The sources told AL-ITTIHAD that the Palestinian conditions are the completion of the Israeli forces redeployment in Hebron in March in implementation of the Taba accord, Israel's agreement to have the Palestine National Council members and the leaders and members of the other factions return and permanently reside in the self-rule areas, and the return of Palestinian deportees from Libya and the release of Palestinian detainees.

The sources said that Christopher promised 'Arafat U.S. assistance of $400 million for the Palestinian Authority over the next three months in exchange for expediting the amendment of the charter before the Israeli elections to help the Israeli Labor Party in these elections.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Said To Speak on Israel's 'Total Collapse'

TA1402052196 (Internet) Eretz Yisra'el Discussion Group in English 14 Feb 96

["Exclusive" by Murray Kahl: "'Arafat's Secret Plans for the 'Total Collapse of Israel'" — "to be broadcast on 'Arutz 7" on 14 February]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Informed sources say that Yasir 'Arafat spoke secretly after a dinner for 40 Arab diplomats in the Spiegel Salon at the Grand Hotel in Stockholm, Sweden on January 30, 1996.

A call to the Protocol Department of the Swedish Foreign Ministry in Stockholm revealed nothing; however, a call to the head of the Press Department confirmed an unofficial meeting held by 'Arafat after dinner for Arab diplomats.

Following are the highlights of 'Arafat's talk: His topic was "The Impending Total Collapse of Israel." He claimed that at least one half the Russian immigrants are Muslim, and they will fight for a united Palestinian State after an expected civil war erupts in Israel.

He further stated that both Shim'on Peres and Yosi Beilin are ready to support a Palestinian State as long as Jews are guaranteed "some" degree of religious freedom. However, Jews are expected to expected to leave the area and emigrate to the United States.

'Arafat: "We Palestinians will take over everything, including all of Jerusalem," 'Arafat declared.

"Peres and Beilin have already promised us half of Jerusalem. The Golan Heights have already been given away, subject to just a few details."

"We will take over everything including all of Jerusalem"!

'Arafat said that after the return of the Golan Heights, at least a million rich Jews will leave Israel. "All the rich Jews who will get compensation will travel to America," he said.

'Arafat then revealed his plan for the Palestinian takeover of Israel:

"We of the PLO will now concentrate all our efforts on splitting Israel psychologically into two camps. Within five years we will have six to seven million Arabs living on the West Bank and in Jerusalem. All Palestinian Arabs will be welcomed back by us. If the Jews can import all kinds of Ethiopians, Russians, Uzbeks and Ukrainians as Jews, then we can import all kinds of Arabs to us! (Three and a half million Arabs will thus be brought to Palestine.) You understand that we plan to eliminate the State of Israel and establish a purely Palestinian State. We will make life unbearable for Jews by psychological warfare and population explosion; Jews will not want to live among us Arabs!

"I have no use for Jews; they are and remain Jews! We now need all the help we can get from you in our battle for a united Palestine under total Arab-Muslim domination!"

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas—Killings by PA Could Spark 'Civil War'

MM1402114996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Feb 96 p 4

[Report by Mufid 'Awwad: "Hamas Warns of Sparks of Civil War"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — The Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas" has urged the Palestinian Authority [PA] to form a joint committee to examine the findings of the investigation into a number of assassinations against a number of Palestinians in the self-rule areas under the PA's control. It warned that the continuation of the crimes against the Palestinian people's sons and the failure to reveal the truth about these crimes and to return like for like to the perpetrators opens the door to the sparks of civil war.

This came in a new memorandum sent to the PA by Hamas. It is dated this month, February. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has obtained a copy of it. It lists the names of 23 people whom Hamas says were shot dead by the PA's military organs.

The memorandum expresses Hamas' concern over serious and irresponsible practices committed by the PA's organs, demanding that the PA declare Ayman al-Razayinah and 'Umar al-A'raj martyrs of the Palestinian people, pay diyah [blood money] to their families, and bear all the financial and social burdens of their martyrdom at the hands of a military unit belonging to the PA.

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Palestinian Affairs: 2 Islamic Jihad Members Arrested for Attack Plan

TA1302192396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A senior Palestinian police officer has said that his men in the West Bank have arrested two terrorists who belong to Fathi al-Shaqaqi's wing of Islamic Jihad, who planned to carry out a terror attack in Israel. He told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that the Palestinian security forces have stepped up its alert to frustrate attacks marking 40 days since the killing of the terrorist Yahya 'Ayyash.

Tulkarm was opened today to Israeli traffic. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that the closure was observed in full in other West Bank cities.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC's Jibril Accuses 'Arafat of 'Forgeries'

NC1302205496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 13 Feb 96

[Telephone interview with PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril by Jihad al-'Idan; place and date not given; from the "News and Reports" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Idan] Mr. Jibril, now that the final results of the Palestinian elections have been announced and Yasir 'Arafat has won, the situation appears bleak in light of several facts. The question is: How can one continue the struggle and what methods do you propose for this purpose?

[Jibril] Our people will now be facing two armies and two organs of oppression, the Zionist one and the 'Arafat one. They are now equipping 20,000 policemen to serve under 'Arafat in the West Bank. These destructive efforts will grow stronger to confront the strugglers and mujahidin. We believe, however, that our people will find several means to continue their struggle and these obstacles will not deter their jihad.

[Al-'Idan] Mr. Jibril, the self-rule authority [Palestinian Authority] is trying hard to convene the PLO Executive Committee with the aim of abolishing several provisions of the Palestinian National Charter, particularly the articles dealing with the illegal Zionist presence. What position will the PFLP-GC [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command] adopt on the convening of the PLO Executive Committee and how will it deal with the self-rule authority's attempts to abolish some of the Charter's articles?

[Jibril] Legally speaking, 'Arafat does not have a quorum to convene a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee. More than half the members did not attend the last meeting. 'Arafat has distorted history and will now commit more forgeries. Regrettably the world, which professes to be democratic and claims to defend self-determination, is silent about his forgeries.

[Al-'Idan] Thank you for giving us this opportunity to speak with you on Tehran Radio's New and Reports program.

[Jibril] Thank you.

Palestinian Affairs: al-Nashashibi on Land Buys, Jeruslaem Sovereignty

TA1302153296 Ramallah AL-AYYAM in Arabic 12 Feb 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ramallah, QUDS PRESS — Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi has said that a ministerial-level Palestinian-Jordanian-Israeli meeting will be held shortly.

Al-Nashashibi added that the meeting will focus on removing the obstacles impeding commercial exchange between Jordan and Palestine.

In another development, al-Nashashibi stressed that in the final solution talks between the PLO and Israel, the Palestinian side will not accept any alternative to the restoration of the occupied eastern part of Jerusalem to Palestinian sovereignty.

Al-Nashashibi refused to confirm or deny reports about secret talks between Palestinian and Israeli academics in a European capital. In a statement to QUDS PRESS, al-Nashashibi said that "Jerusalem is the first item on the agenda of the final stage talks," alongside other issues that will be discussed in the talks such as the refugee problem, the settlements, borders, the establishment of a state, the right of self-determination, and so forth.

Al-Nashashibi emphasized that Jerusalem "cannot be anything but Palestinian. It is an occupied city to which Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 apply." He noted that the Palestinian side does not favor the establishment of two municipalities in Jerusalem operating under a central municipality. Moreover, the Palestinians cannot accept international management of the holy sites, and there is no suitable formula on the horizon for international supervision over these sites.

On the purchase by Palestinians of Israeli settlements' land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, al-Nashashibi said: "We do not buy land that belongs to us. This is expropriated land. It must be returned and the settlements dismantled completely. If any settler wishes to remain, we will consider the matter — but only after the settlements are dismantled." [passage omitted]

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Palestinian Affairs: Minister Criticizes Israeli Settlement 'Expansion'

JN1302162396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Labor Minister Dr. Samir Ghawshah said that Israel's settlement expansion activity is a flagrant violation of the agreements between the two sides. Ghawshah criticized an Israeli plan to build 5,000 housing units in Jerusalem. He said this plan seeks to establish facts on the ground ahead of talks on a final settlement.

Ghawshah added that the National Authority intends to send memos to all parties concerned, particularly the cosponsors of the peace process and the Security Council, over the next few days to explain the Israeli violations.

Ahmad Quray', member of the Legislative Assembly, is scheduled to hold talks with the Israeli side tomorrow on the settlement activity and its recent drive, particularly the building of a wall near Rachel's Tomb.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Receives 2 U.S. Senators

JN1302134196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received U.S. Senators Charles Robb and James Inhofe at the Presidential Office today. They discussed the latest developments in the peace process in light of the success of the Palestinian presidential and legislative elections.

Palestinian Affairs: Central Asian Nations Recognize PA Passport

JN1302210896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan now recognize the passport issued by the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Three statements issued by the foreign ministries of those states say that they welcome and officially recognize the Palestinian passport.

Palestinian Affairs: Correction of Official Election Results

JN1202151396 Ramallah Palestine Television Network in Arabic 1859 GMT 10 Feb 96

[Corrected version of news conference by Mahmud 'Abbas, chairman of the Palestinian Central Election Committee and Dr. Riyad al-Khudari, official committee spokesman, with unidentified correspondents in Gaza—live; originally filed as JN1002214196 and add; correcting or clearing indistinct names]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The results of the presidential elections of the Palestinian Executive Authority are as follows:

Brother President Yasir 'Arafat received 87.01 percent and won as president of the Palestinian National Authority. Sister Samihah Khalil received 9.62 percent.

The results of the Palestinian Legislative Council elections are as follows:

Jerusalem Constituency: Brother Ahmad 'Ali Muhammad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala'; Hanan Dawud Khalil 'Ashrawi; Ahmad Husni Khalil al-Batsh; Ziyad 'Ali Khalil Abu-Zayyad; Hatim Muhammad 'Abd-al-Qadir 'Id; Ahmad Hashim Ahmad Zughayyar; Emile Musa Basil Jarju'i; 'Abd-al- Karim Mahmud Musallam Abu-Salah.

Qalqilyah Constituency: Mahmud Ahmad Mahmud Da'as, 'Uthman Husayn al-Hajj 'Ali Ghashshash.

Salfit Constituency: Ahmad Fawzi Khalid al-Dik.

Tubas Constituency: Hashim Sulayman Salih Daraghimah.

Janin Constituency: Burhan Nihad Kifah Ibrahim Jarrar, Jamal Shati Yunis al-Hindi, Hikmat Hashim Lutfi Zayd, 'Azzam Najib Mustafa al-Ahmad, Ahmad Sulayman Ahmad Irshayd, Fakhri Fahd Musa Ahmad al-Turkuman.

Nabulus Constituency: Fayiz 'Arif Ahmad Zaydan, Mu'awiyah 'Ali Amin al-Masri, Ghassan Walid Ahmad al-Shak'ah, Mahir Nash'at Tahir al-Masri, Husam Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman Khadr, Dalal 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mahmud Salamah, Kamil Muhammad Salih al-Afghani, Sallum 'Umran Ishaq al-Kahin.

Tulkarm Constituency: Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim Mahmud Halim, Mufid Yusuf Muhammad 'Abd-Rabbuh, Hakam 'Umar As'ad Bal'awi, Hasan 'Abd- al-Fattah 'Abd-al-Halim Khurayshah.

Jericho Constituency: Sa'ib Muhammad Salih 'Urayqat.

Bethlehem Constituency: As'ad Sulayman Hasan 'Abd-al-Qadir, known as Salah al-Ta'mari; Dawud Hasan Muhammad al-Zir; Bisharah Saliba Sulayman Dawud; Mitri [name indistinct] Jiryis Abu-'Aytah.

Ramallah Constituency: 'Abd-al-Jawad Salih 'Ata al-Hamayil, Qaddurah Faris Ibrahim Faris Hamid, 'Abd-al-Fattah Muhammad Ibrahim Hamayil, Jamil Qasim Muslih al-Tarifi, 'Azmi Salih Muhammad al-Shu'aybi, Mar-

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wan Hasib Husayn al-Barghuthi, Ghazi Hanna Khalil Hananiya.

Hebron Constituency: Sharif 'Ali Husayn Mish'al, known as 'Abbas Zaki; Musa Yasin 'Isa Abu-Sabhah; Jamal 'Abd-al-Latif Salih al- Shubaki; Nabil Mahmud Yusuf 'Amr; Muhammad 'Abd-al-Fattah Muhammad al-Hurani; Rafiq Shakir Darwish al-Natshah; Zahran Khalil Salih Abu- Qubaytah; 'Ali Muhammad Husayn Abu-al-Rish; Sulayman Mahmud Musa Abu-Sunaynah; 'Ali Ibrahim Ghazzal al-Qawasimi.

The results from the Gaza constituencies:

Northern Gaza Constituency: Yusuf 'Attalah Ibrahim Abu-Safiyah, Fu'ad Ibrahim Mahmud 'Id, Hisham 'Ali Husayn Hasan 'Abd-al-Raziq, 'Abd-al-Rahman Tawfiq 'Abd-al-Hadi Hamad, Karam Muhammad Dawud Zarandah, Kamal al-'Abid Muhammad al-Shurafi, 'Imad 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Faluji.

Gaza Constituency:

Gaza City: Haydar Muhyi-al-Din Darwish 'Abd-al-Shafi, Fakhri 'Umran Taha Shaqqurah, Nahid Munir Muhammad al-Rayyis, Intisar Mustafa Mahmud al-Wazir, Riyad Dhib Salim al-Za'nun, Ziyad Mahmud Husayn Abu-'Amr, Wajih Khalil Mustafa Yaghi, Musa Mahmud Hamid al- Za'but, Marwan Muhammad Fayiz Kanafani, Yusuf Muhammad Ahmad al- Shanti, Rawiyah Rashad Sa'id al-Shawwa, Faraj Bisharah Salim al- Sarraf.

As for the Dayr al-Balah Constituency, the winners are: Furayh Abu-Middayn, [name indistinct; Jericho Voice of Palestine at 1900 GMT on 10 February gives the name as Dr. Sa'di al-Kurunz], Jamilah Ahmad Khamis Saydam, Ibrahim Isma'il Ahmad al-Habbash, Jalal Furayh Farhan al-Musaddar.

The Khan Yunus constituency: Nabil 'Ali Rashid Sha'th, Jawad Khalil Hasan al-Tibi, Ra'fat 'Uthman 'Ali al-Najjar, Ibrahim Musa Ibrahim Abu-al-Naja, Ahmad al-'Abd Muhammad al-Shibi, Hasan Muhammad Ahmad 'Asfur, Ahmad 'Abd-al-Fattah Ahmad Nasr, and 'Abd-al-Karim Mahmud Musallam Abu-Salah.

Rafah is the last constituency in the state of Palestine: 'Abd- Rabbuh Husayn Sa'd al-Din Abu-'Awn, Muhammad Sulayman Musa Hijazi, Rawhi Ahmad Fattuh, 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Ali Shahin, and Sulayman Salam al-Rumi.

We wish them and the brother president success in the forthcoming march, God willing. [applause] [passage omitted]

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israel, Jordan, PA Sign Regional Water Document

TA1302163696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon in Oslo, representatives of Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority [PA] initialed a declaration of principles on regional cooperation for the development of water sources. The declaration was signed in Oslo in the presence of Norwegian and U.S. representatives. The spokesman of the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem noted that this is the first regional agreement on water issues.

Our correspondent in Scandinavia Eliyahu Zehavi reports that the Oslo Foreign Ministry issued a special statement on the agreement, saying it is pending the approval of the governments involved. The agreement signed today does not deal with the distribution of existing water sources or rights to them, but with the development of new water sources, imports or desalination of water.

The agreement also includes clauses pertaining to coordination among institutions that deal with water issues and coordinating legislation. It was also decided that a ministerial committee will be established to coordinate the joint activities of the Israeli, Jordanian, and PA water representatives.

Our correspondent Gil Litman has learned that a Norwegian research institute has gathered information on water sources in Syria and Lebanon. This information, when the time comes, will serve as a basis for negotiations on water agreements between Israel and the two countries.

Arab-Israeli Talks: Palestinian Delegate on Quadrilateral Meetings

NC1402095596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2247 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Feb (MENA)—The Technical Quadrilateral Committee formed to discuss the displaced persons met tonight to resume discussion of the topics on its agenda. The committee comprises representatives from Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel.

Ambassador Zuhdi Sa'idi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the committee meetings, praised Egypt's active role in the committee throughout its previous and current meetings. He said Egypt patronizes and embraces the option of peace.

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He said in a statement that the Palestinians appreciate Egypt's role so that they can get all their rights. He pointed out that the Egyptian people shared every stage of the Palestinian people's struggle against the occupation.

The Palestinian official described today's committee meetings as positive. He said they broke the deadlock prevailing over past meetings.

Ambassador Zuhdi Sa'idi said the quadripartite committee will issue a final statement tomorrow on the results of its meetings. The next meeting will be held in Bethlehem in the West Bank during 21-23 March.

Asked about the results of the committee's meetings during the evening session today, he said the committee prepared the ground for the numbers, documents, and papers dealing with the repatriation of the displaced persons. These will be studied and prepared during the next meeting.

He added that the results of the Cairo meeting are considered a crucial step forward on the previous six meetings.

He said that if we are discussing numbers it means the definition of the displaced persons has been defined. He said the crisis erupted largely because the media interfered in the meetings of the committee by publishing numbers that had no source on any side. This confused all the sides.

On the closeness of the Arab and Israeli viewpoints regarding the problem of the displaced people, Ambassador Zuhdi Sa'idi said the Arab stance adheres to the proposal it made at the beginning of the committee meeting. This is that the right to repatriation for the 1967 displaced persons to the West Bank and Gaza Strip is a right agreed upon in the Declaration of Principles and Article 12 of the Oslo Agreement. The committee role on this issue has been a mere formality.

On the Israeli side, he said there was Israeli belligerence regarding the right to repatriation for these displaced Palestinians. We believe the right to repatriation is a major part of the right to self-determination. It is a major part of the peace option agreed upon by the Arabs and Israelis.

Arab-Israeli Talks: Cairo Meeting on Displaced Persons Opens

NC1302142796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Feb (MENA)—The Quadrilateral Committee examining the issue of Palestinian displaced persons began its seventh round of talks at the Foreign Ministry this morning. The committee is comprised of representatives from Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel.

The Palestinian and Israeli sides agreed in 1994 to discuss the displaced persons issue by creating a permanent committee that would examine ways to arrange their repatriation. After six rounds of talks the committee is still unable to reach practical and tangible results. Discussions still center on the definition and number of displaced persons. The previous rounds of talks showed clear differences in views between the three Arab parties—Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine—and Israel.

While the Israeli side defines displaced persons as those who have left the territories occupied in 1967—who number approximately 200,000—the Palestinian Authority puts the figure at 1.5 million, accounting for their increase over the past 28 years. The Israeli side divides the displaced persons into eight categories, while the Arab parties have a different definition that divides them into three categories only. During the past six rounds, the Israeli side denied the right of repatriation to Palestinians wanted for security reasons and treated the displaced persons according to their geographic location rather than their date of departure.

Israel proposed a specific and gradual mechanism for the repatriation of those whose return it approves. Under this timetable, 4,000 displaced persons would be repatriated annually, taking into account Israel's security and the absorption capacity of the West Bank and Gaza.

According to diplomatic sources, the Palestinians, in conjunction with Egypt and Jordan, are still trying to work out a general framework for the unconditional repatriation of all displaced persons without exception, particularly the deportees and including those described as persons displaced for the second time. The same sources added that in view of all parties' desire to continue the peace process, satisfactory solutions to the problem of displaced persons are expected to be reached in another one or two rounds, thus paving the way for a final solution to the Palestinian problem.

The Egyptian delegation to this round is led by Ambassador Badr Hammam, assistant foreign minister for Arab affairs; while the Palestinian side is led by by Dr. Zuhdi al-Sa'idi; the Jordanian side by Ambassador Muhammad al-Shahankiri, Jordan's ambassador in Sudan; and the Israeli side by Joseph Hadas [name as transliterated].

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Algeria

Algeria: Government Delays Implementation of Wage Cuts

LD1302190696 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Algeria, the two-day strike called by UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers] has received overwhelming response from civil servants. They were protesting against deductions from the wages of civil servants decided by the government. The strike paralyzed public transport and large industrial centers. The hydrocarbon sector was also affected.

The authorities backed down a little today when they put off the implementation of wage deductions for one month. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Spokesmen Cite Support for 48-Hour National Strike

LD1302153096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1130 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A 48-hour national general strike from today: the call was given on Sunday [11 February] afternoon by the country's main trade union, the UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers], in protest against the measures agreed by the government to reduce salaries in order to pay the 200,000 workers who have not been paid for several months. [passage omitted]

In Algiers, the area union asked workers to go to their usual workplaces and occupy them, while observing the strike. An example is radio, where all the workers are present, the programs are being broadcast as normal, but a rally has been organized by the union branch. Its shop steward explains his thoughts to Linda Habdoun:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified shop steward] As you see, our workers are mobilized. They are conducting a sit-in today and tomorrow, and we hope that the government will revoke this decision.

[Habdoun] We can see that there are not a lot of people at this sit-in.

[Steward] You know that we are bound by law to provide a minimum service; so we have brought people who were able to make it to the sit-in. But there also transport problems, but anyhow, you can see that lots of people, who were able to come, have come. [end recording]

According to reports from all over the country, the strike is being overwhelmingly supported and the workers are respecting the rules of the game, notably the putting in place of a minimum service. [passage omitted]

Onto other business, such as Air Algerie: the SPLA, the Union of Airline Pilots, which is not affiliated to the UGTA but which supports the strike, believes it is getting 100-percent support from the pilots:

[Unidentified person] Today's strike was supported completely by all the pilots; thus no aircraft took off from Algerian airports. All the workers are at their workplaces, including the pilots, but all the workers are on strike. [passage omitted]

In the schools, according to information which at the moment is limited to the Algiers region, the strike is being supported equally well. The teachers are present in their schools, but in certain schools, pupils have been asked to go home. Other sectors: health — In the hospitals, a minimum service is assured. At the Mustapha [name indistinct] University Hospital Center of Bab el-Oued, the injured from the latest attacks [the bomb attacks of 11 February] are being well looked after. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Capital 'Paralyzed' on Second Strike Day

LD1402115096 Paris France-2 Teletext in French 1033 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Algiers was paralyzed on Wednesday [14 February] on the second day of the general strike launched by the union federation, the UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers], in protest against wage cuts in the public sector.

There is no public transport and gas stations, schools, civil service offices and banks are closed. Newspapers have not been published because the strike affects print shops. State television and radio staff are also on strike.

Algeria: Toll Update From Bombing—21 Dead, Nearly 100 Injured

LD1302185196 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The toll for the two car bomb attacks in Algiers on Sunday [11 February] has risen to 21 dead and nearly 100 injured. This is one of the most deadly attacks in Algeria in four years.

Egypt

Egypt: Musa Denies Israel Involved in Yemen-Eritrea Dispute

NC1302171496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1615 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that reports

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about Israeli involvement in the Yemeni-Eritrean conflict are untrue. He also explained that Egypt's position on this dispute is to be alert to any threat to its interests in the Red Sea whether Israel is involved or not.

Musa, who was speaking to reporters after delivering a foreign policy statement to the People's Assembly today, commented on the issue of the Egyptian fishermen [detained] in Yemen. He said that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry's position on this issue is different from the other party's position. He declared: We are saying that the Egyptian fishing boats were in international waters. In their view, the boats had entered their territorial waters.

Commenting on the Yemeni fish resources minister's complaint that Egyptian fishing boats are badly equipped, Musa said that Egypt has agreements with the concerned countries and that Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz is handling this issue in coordination with various other ministries.

Egypt: Musa on Possible Yemeni-Eritrean Summit in Cairo

NC1302183296 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that the current ideas on the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute include a proposal to hold a Yemeni-Eritrean summit between Presidents 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Isaias Afworki in Cairo in the coming days.

Yemeni Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani is expected in Cairo next week for a visit lasting a few hours. During the visit, he will hold important talks with 'Amr Musa on the continuing Egyptian efforts to resolve the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute over the Hanish islands and to prepare for a proposed summit between the Yemeni and Eritrean presidents in Cairo.

President Mubarak met with the Eritrean president in Cairo this week. They discussed ways to bring the Yemeni and Eritrean presidents' views on their dispute over the Hanish islands closer.

Egypt: Yemeni Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks With Musa

NC1402115796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Feb (MENA)—Yemeni Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani arrived in Cairo this morning on a short visit.

During his visit al-Iryani will meet Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who received him upon arrival.

President Husni Mubarak received Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, Yemeni deputy prime minister and foreign minister, at the presidential headquarters at noon today. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Yemen's ambassador in Cairo attended the meeting.

Egypt: Musa Discusses Foreign Policy With MP's

NC1302183596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has emphasized that President Husni Mubarak's address at the joint session of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council at the beginning of the current parliamentary session and Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri's statement at the People's Assembly have outlined Egypt's foreign policy.

He said Egyptian foreign policy is active on various political levels on the Arab, African, and world scenes and is working to complete the Middle East peace process so that a comprehensive and just peace can be established in the region.

These remarks were included in Musa's statement to a joint committee of the Foreign Relations, Arab Affairs, and Defense and National Security Committees of the People's Assembly at their meeting today.

The foreign minister said Egypt is eager to support the peace process in the region and added that the next few months will witness progress in the peace process on various tracks. He said Egypt will play a major role in organizing Arab affairs, reaching a comprehensive and just peace, and maintaining Arab and regional ties.

Musa told the Assembly members that the success of the economic reforms is an important, even key, factor and perhaps the only thing enabling Egypt to assume its appropriate position and to have the power to face political challenges through its national economy.

As for problems in the region, he affirmed that Egypt is seeking a solution to the dispute between Yemen and Eritrea. He noted that the Yemeni foreign minister will arrive in Cairo in the next few days to continue the discussion of this problem.

Concerning the situation in Sudan, Musa emphasized that relations between the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples are historic. He added that what has emerged in Sudan lately has caused Sudan to lose the support of many Arab and African countries. He noted that Sudan's policy is to support terrorism and it has turned its territory into a center for training terrorists, adding that Algeria and Egypt have accused Sudan of supporting terrorism. He said that Sudan must clear itself of the

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charges leveled against it, stressing that Egypt cannot keep quiet about the attempt to assassinate its president. He said there is evidence that Sudan caries out terrorist acts, adding that Sudan has to comply with the Security Council resolution.

In his statement, Musa discussed Egypt's relations with the Mediterranean, Arab, and African countries and emphasized to the committee members Egypt's concern about good ties and cooperation with all countries.

At the end of the meeting, Musa answered the members' questions on several issues, such as the fishermen's problem. He emphasized the Foreign Ministry's concern to solve their problems through contacts with the countries concerned.

Commenting on the prisoners, the foreign minister said that agreement had been reached to form a committee entrusted with solving this problem.

[In a similar report on Foreign Minister Musa's address to the People's Assembly committees, Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1425 GMT on 13 February says: "Musa asserted in his address today to a joint meeting of the People's Assembly committees of Arab Affairs, Foreign Relations, and National Security that Sudan will harm its interests if it pursues its current policies and refuses to cooperate properly with regional and world organizations.

["Musa emphasized that the Hala'ib issue is stable and that it may constitute a point of communication, not conflict. He said: When considering the relationship with Sudan we view its northern borders as stretching up to Alexandria and Egypt's southern borders as extending to Sudan's Juba.

["Commenting on Jerusalem, Musa said: Let us consider Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' remarks about it as merely electioneering statements. We allow him to make such statements and do not attach any importance to them. He added that the final status has not been decided yet and that Jerusalem will be included in the negotiations, noting that what is important is what we all agree upon as Arabs. Any other statements, he said, are intended for local consumption and may be disregarded until the negotiating process begins.

["He added that agreement has been reached with Israel on the killing of Egyptian prisoners and that a committee has indeed been set up in Israel to investigate the issue. However, we have not yet been notified of any findings and when we receive the committee's report we will reply, he added.

["As regards the arrest of Egyptian fishermen, Musa expressed his great concern even though the issue is a matter for the Agriculture Ministry. What is required, he said, is the conclusion of agreements and legalization of the boats' qualifications to keep pace with the latest fishing technology in line with other international fishing boats. Until this is done, international laws regulating fishing must be observed, he said.

["On the negotiations between Syria and Israel, Musa said there is improvement in the general atmosphere and progress on certain points for an agreement on cooperation. He added that there is a desire on both sides not to upset the talks, but the issue will take some time. He said the holding of early Israeli elections in May will not obstruct the negotiations as was agreed upon during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's latest tour.

["On the Palestinian track, Musa clarified that there is progress in implementing the Oslo accord but that there are some difficulties which we are trying to resolve. He noted that talks on the final stage will begin on 4 May and that early Israeli elections might coincide with the negotiations on the final phase, which will revolve around the refugees, Jerusalem, settlements, borders, and water. He emphasized that no just and comprehensive peace can be established without the Palestinian people exercising their right to self-determination and without reaching a fair, proper, and sound solution to the Palestinian issue.

["Musa stressed the importance of and need for bridging the gap in the Arab fold and creating an Arab grouping conscious of future developments. He said what is required is organizing the Arab situation, reaching a just and stable peace in the Middle East, and maintaining Arab interests.

["Musa stressed the need for a stable peace in the Red Sea region and the Horn of Africa, describing this as an important element for Egyptian national security because Egypt's national interests are linked to that process. Referring to Egypt's recent political moves and Egypt's reception of Eritrean President Isaias Afworki, he said these moves are part of an Egyptian effort to settle the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute peacefully. Musa described the situation in Somalia as hopeless. He said it might lead to the disappearance of Somalia, not just its marginalization. He added that the situation has reached a sub-zero point and this shakes stability in the Horn of Africa.

["Musa commented on Egypt's status in the Arab Maghreb Union as an observer. He said that differences among the member states led to the postponement of a summit conference which was supposed to discuss Egypt's membership as an observer. He denied that there is any reservation about Egypt's membership in that union.

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["He said Egypt's relations with Algeria are good and strong and that the Algerian crisis has begun to relax. Musa added that relations with Libya are good and that there are some differences in views, but they do not affect the essence of relations.

["After the foreign minister's speech, members of the three committees held expanded discussions with Musa. They praised the role of the Foreign Ministry and Egyptian diplomacy in strengthening Egypt's ties with other countries. Dr. Tulbah 'Uwaydah, chairman of the Arab Relations Committee, emphasized that Hasan al-Turabi's continued presence as the head of the Sudanese regime will increase tension in the region."]

Egypt: Daily Condemns London Blast, Says UK Shelters 'Terrorists'

NC1402105396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0710 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Feb (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR condemns the recent explosion in east London, which killed or injured dozens and caused property damage estimated at approximately 100 million pounds sterling. In its Wednesday [14 February] editorial, the paper says that all Egyptians felt sad over this incident, as they did when the Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan was bombed, because the goal behind these incidents was purely criminal and not national. The second incident was attributed to the IRA, which demands independence from the United Kingdom.

AL-AKHBAR says: We do not conceal our regret and condemnation of the sabotage in London, despite the stance of the British authorities. They have hosted leaders of the Egyptian terrorist gangs, who have taken refuge in the UK and use its territory as a center for running and directing their crimes. The paper asserts that Britain will reconsider this stance after having experienced what these terrorists may do.

Sudan

Sudan: UN Envoy To Investigate Assassination Plot Charges

NC1302174396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1320 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 13 Feb (MENA)—Citing well-informed African sources in Cairo, AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I reports today that UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali will dispatch Chinmaya Gharekhan, his special envoy to Sudan and other African countries, including Egypt and Ethiopia, to assess and investigate the charges leveled by Egypt and Ethiopia against Sudan. Sudan is accused of involvement in the assassination attempt on President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa. The envoy will request urgent meetings with the Sudanese officials concerning the issue.

The UN envoy will ask Sudan to hand over all the documents and reports that will be requested by the United Nations within a period of 60 days. The envoy will confront the Sudanese officials with all the international charges, including the places identified by some countries as areas especially built to harbor terrorists.

Furthermore, the UN envoy will make a long visit to Ethiopia, during which he will meet with the OAU secretary general and the Ethiopian foreign minister. He will also visit Egypt to gather new information and documents about the charges against Sudan. These documents and information will be included in the final report which will be compiled by the UN secretary general and submitted to the Security Council. [passage omitted]

In another development, the paper reports that the differences between Lebanon and Sudan have intensified over the past few days since the Lebanese authorities officially warned the al-Bashir government to immediately hand over the Sudanese nationals and a Palestinian accused of killing Shaykh Nizar al-Halabi, leader of the al-Ahbash Muslin sect in Lebanon. He was assassinated three months ago.

Arab sources in Cairo said that the Lebanese authorities have addressed a warning to the Sudanese Government to hand over the defendants, who escaped from Lebanon to Khartoum recently, and who are now residing in Sudan, according to statements made by some of their colleagues who are involved in the killing of Shaykh Nizar al-Halabi.

Lebanon has threatened to resort to the United Nations and the Arab League if Sudan refuses to hand over the defendants to stand trial in Lebanon.

Sudan: Government Says Eritrea Violating International Law

EA1302214096 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During a news briefing today, the Foreign Ministry declared that the Eritrean Government's decision, repeatedly reported by the media recently, to hand over the Sudanese Embassy buildings in Asmara to the Sudanese opposition groups, which are using violence in their efforts to overthrow the government in Sudan, was yet another glaring piece of evidence of the Afwerki regime's determination to violate the international law and norms. The Foreign Ministry's

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spokesman said that the Eritrean decision violated article 45-A of the Vienna Diplomatic relations agreement signed in April 1961.

Sudan: Foreign Minister Meets Visiting OAU Official

EA1302225196 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha, today received in his office the leader of the OAU delegation, Ambassador (Daniel Antonio), who is in Sudan in the context of cooperation with Sudan in the efforts being made to track down the suspects involved in the attempt to assassinate the Egyptian president in Addis Ababa.

During the meeting, the minister affirmed Sudan's full readiness to cooperate with the OAU in dealing with the matter.

For his part, Ambassador (Antonio) thanked the minister and conveyed to him greetings from OAU secretary general Salim Ahmad Salim, who has accepted Sudan's invitation to visit the country next March. Ambassador (Antonio) also affirmed that the organization would participate in supervising the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

Sudan: Opposition Leader on Presidential Election

AB1302202796 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 13 Feb 96

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At one time it looked as if the Islamic-oriented military regime in Sudan was looking for a rapprochement with al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, the Ummah Party leader whose government they overthrew in 1989. He's consistently been their most outspoken critic and he's been in and out of jail under General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, but recently there there's even been talk that al-Sadiq might stand in the forthcoming presidential elections next month and if he did it might add legitimacy to the exercise which is being conducted on a nonparty basis. In Khartoum, Mary Harper asked al-Sadiq al-Mahdi if he would in fact be standing:

[Begin recording] [al-Sadiq] As you know, dictatorship finds itself short on legitimacy. Therefore they seek legitimacy by all ways and means. They call elections, things that have nothing to do with proper elections. You cannot have elections in the presence of martial law. You cannot have elections in the absence of basic freedoms. So we say that elections under dictatorship are nothing more than window dressing to try to mitigate the external pressures and internal pressures that are opposing the oppressive policies. We do not recognize those elections. We think they are elections within the ranks of those who support the present regime and since we think the supporters of the present regime are a minority, we think that the whole process is fake.

[Harper] So why don't you as possibly the most well-known, famous representative of the opposition, put your name forward as presidential candidate and possibly get elected?

[Al-Sadiq] Of course, I am prepared to do that or if not myself, other citizens who oppose the government are prepared to do so, if they are proper elections. I am myself barred from leaving the country, barred from leaving Khartoum. How can I stand if I am myself now under such legal shackles? If there are going to be proper elections so that the present regime is judged by the people of Sudan, we very much welcome that and either myself or any other members of the opposition will present themselves. If there are proper elections, it will be stupid of any citizen who wishes to present his or her view to boycott them, but since we think that they are window-dressing elections that have been run by all dictatorship regimes all over the world, we don't feel that we should be hoodwinked into such a process.

[Harper] But by boycotting these elections, even if, as you say, they are not real elections, aren't you just marginalizing yourself and your supporters even more? You're just putting yourself into a corner with no ability to have influence in the rest of the country.

[Al-Sadiq] No, this is not true. I think that the weight of the opposition is expressed in terms of the failure and the crisis that the government is facing and the failures and the crisis that the government is facing, if anything else, they are increasing daily and elections will do nothing to weaken this position. [end recording]

Sudan: Electoral Commission Summons Presidential Candidates

EA1302215696 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Zayn al-Nahhas, chairman of the general electoral commission, has called on candidates for the Presidency of the Republic, whose names have appeared in the first list, to meet the commission at a date not later than tomorrow, Wednesday [14 February], and bring with them their qualifications papers, identity cards and curricula vitae. Mr. al-Nahhas said that a candidate could appear in person before the commission or authorize someone else to represent him. He added that candidates for the

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presidential elections would be categorized into groups, who would be questioned with a view to validating their documents of eligibility before the final list of candidates was published.

The chairman of the commission said that candidates for the presidential elections would not be subjected to the administrative objection process, because, he added, that would be done by the commission itself.

Mr. al-Nahhas went on to say that special courts to look into election objection cases had been established in the geographical constituencies. The courts, he said, would sit on 15 and 16 February.

He said that the names of some candidates for geographical constituencies in the states had been received by the commission. He affirmed that the objection process had started on 12 February all over the country, after which final lists of candidates would be released and arbitration committees would start their work.

Sudan: Minister on Contacts With Opposition, UN Sanctions

MM1302153496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 96 p 7

[Report by al-Makki Ahmad: "Sudanese Minister Confirms Contacts Between Regime and Opposition To Achieve Reconciliation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Doha — Sudanese Federal Rule Minister Dr. 'Ali al-Hajj Muhammad has revealed that contacts are being made "inside and outside the country between the government and the opposition through initiatives by some religious leaders with a view to uniting ranks." He pointed to a meeting held between Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, secretary general of the ruling [National] Islamic Front in Sudan, and al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of the opposition Ummah Party and former prime minister, last Thursday [8 February].

Muhammad, who is visiting Doha on an unofficial mission aimed at securing [financial] support for a road project in western Sudan, said that "Eritrea has a complex about the regime in Sudan, and all that is happening is attributed to (President Isaias) Afwerki, not the Eritrean people." Asked about Eritrea's decision to hand over the Sudanese Embassy building in Asmara to the Sudanese opposition, he said: "If Afwerki wants to recognize the opposition as the government of Sudan, let him enjoy the Sudanese opposition."

On the recent visit to Sudan by David Cheney, U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Muhammad said: "The United States accepted the person nominated by the Sudanese Government as Sudan's ambassador to Washington, and its envoy came to assure the government that the withdrawal of the embassy's staff does not mean the severance of relations and to emphasize the continuation of dialogue between the United States and Sudan."

His country, he said, expects "an invasion from outside," pointing out that "the opposition, having failed inside the country, sought help from the outside world, Egypt, and Eritrea. The aim is to invade Sudan from outside." He stressed that "the eastern front is open after the Ethiopian aggression." However, he denied "the existence of any fighting in southern Sudan since the Ugandan aggression."

On the possibility that the Security Council could impose sanctions on Sudan in the event of its failure to hand over the three people suspected of involvement in the attempt on the Egyptian president, he said that the "blockade already exists." "However, I do not want to anticipate events. We will talk about it then. But if we are forced to fight, we will rely on ourselves and our capabilities."

He vehemently criticized the Sudanese opposition for refusing to participate in the upcoming elections, saying: "If they claim to represent 80 percent of the Sudanese people, why do they not run in the elections?"

Sudan: NDG Leader on Withdrawal of U.S. Envoys, Future Action

NC1302205596 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 10 Feb 96 p 9

[Report by Muhammad Amin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mubarak al-Mahdi, secretary general of the Sudanese opposition National Democratic Grouping [NDG], has expressed his belief that Washington's decision to withdraw its diplomats from Khartoum means the end of the salvation regime on regional and international levels. He said that Washington's decision represents a withdrawal of recognition for this regime.

Al-Mahdi added that the U.S. Administration's decision is in line with the UN Security Council resolution concerning terrorism in Sudan, including the handing over of the three terrorists involved in the vile assassination attempt on President Husni Mubarak in Ethiopia, the elimination of the terrorist training camps, and the renouncing of terrorism. The Sudanese opposition leader maintained that the U.S. step and the UN resolution corroborate the international stance aimed at confronting the Sudanese regime's backing of terrorism.

Al-Mahdi revealed that the Sudanese opposition is preparing military action against the Khartoum regime. He said the plans for this action will be revealed soon,

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noting that this action will surprise many people. Al-Mahdi, however, declined to elaborate on the military operations to prevent any attempted obstruction of them.

The secretary general of the NDG, the umbrella opposition group, said that Eritrea's decision to hand over the Sudanese Embassy in Asmara to the Sudanese opposition is tied to the UN Security Council resolution, namely withdrawing recognition of the Khartoum regime, indicating the end of this regime on the international and regional levels [as published].

Al-Mahdi stressed that withdrawing recognition of the Sudanese regime must be followed by another decision to consolidate the opposition, in its capacity as the representative of the legitimate democratic forces and the majority of the Sudanese people. [passage omitted]

The NDG secretary general expressed the conviction that other countries will take measures similar to the Eritrean step. He added that the measures could be executed differently. Al-Mahdi ruled out that Asmara might be the place for a government-in-exile, pointing out that the Sudanese opposition does not talk about this kind of government, but about the imminent collapse of the Sudanese regime.

Al-Mahdi affirmed that an opposition government will be formed in Sudan, particularly since the NDG factions have vast areas of land in Sudan, namely the Popular Army for the Liberation of Sudan Front in the south.

Responding to a question on whether he expects other countries to adopt a step similar to that of Eritrea, al-Mahdi said: I expect they will, especially if our embassy in a particular country is unoccupied or becomes unoccupied.

Sudan: al-Mahdi Reiterates Terms for Dialogue With Regime

MM1402160596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "Al-Mahdi Tells al-Turabi: No Dialogue Except Over Handover of Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Sources close to al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, former Sudanese prime minister and leader of the opposition Ummah Party, have stressed that he continues to insist on his condition of not engaging in any dialogue with "the decisionmakers" in Khartoum except over "the handover of power to the people and the restoration of democratic life."

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that al-Mahdi conveyed this position to Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, secretary general of the National Islamic Front and the Arab Islamic People's Congress, at a meeting between them a few days ago.

The sources pointed out that al-Mahdi had agreed to the recent meeting with al-Turabi when three intermediaries informed him of the Islamic Front secretary general's wish to meet with him to discuss what is meant by the term "handover" and ways of finding a solution to the crisis in the country.

According to the sources, the three intermediaries who visited al-Mahdi to arrange for the meeting with al-Turabi are Dr. 'Isam al-Siddiq, Mahjub 'Urwah, and Muhammad 'Uthman 'Abd-al-Basit. Al-Mahdi agreed to hold the meeting on the understanding that the aim was to discuss the issue of the "handover of power," on the grounds that it is the solution to Sudan's crisis.

The meeting was held in Dr. 'Isam al-Siddiq's house in the al-Jurayf area in Khartoum. Dr. al-Turabi spoke in detail about and analyzed current conditions. The sources said that Dr. al-Turabi spoke for nearly an hour, so al-Mahdi interrupted him and said: Did you call me to this meeting as a step to find an alternative, or is your aim to keep the regime in power and improve its image?

When al-Turabi said that the meeting was being held in the framework of the continuation of the situation, al-Mahdi stood up and said: "Then there is no meeting." And he walked out. The sources said that al-Mahdi "is determined not to hold any meetings or dialogues except to discuss the issue of handing over power to the people." And he pointed out that he would not have agreed to the recent meeting with al-Turabi if it had not been his understanding that the discussions would focus on this issue only.

Al-Mahdi had rejected a previous request to hold a meeting with al-Turabi, telling another intermediary, namely Shaykh al-Ja'li, leader of the al-Qadiriyah Movement [al-harakah al-qadiriyah] in Sudan, that he would not agree to hold any meeting except on the basis of the condition represented in the handover of power, and that he would not agree to hold any meetings which the regime wants to use for political and informational maneuvering.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Prime Minister Visits Bomb Site

JN1302154596 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1405 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Manama, 13 Feb (WAKH)—Bahraini Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah visited the Diplomat Hotel this morning. He was received by Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Zabani, chairman of the board of directors of the National Hotels Company, which owns the hotel, members of the executive board of directors, and senior officials of the Diplomat Hotel.

At the beginning of his visit to the scene of the explosion, his highness inspected the damage caused by the sinful outlaws, as well as the hotel's reception area and hall, which had been quickly repaired. The hotel had already resumed business and had received customers. His highness inspected the hotel's various facilities and listened to a briefing on the hotel employees' tremendous efforts to repair the damage and destruction caused by the 11 February explosion. He also inspected the main hall and other halls.

During his inspection of the Diplomat Hotel this morning, his highness said: Terrorism has no place here. We are determined to confront violence and sabotage to preserve security, stability, and our people's achievements and to realize our people's aspirations.

His highness the prime minister also said that such terrorist actions will only make us more determined to denounce these terrorists, who are a small group of hirelings who do not belong on this good soil.

His highness urged the people to be aware of evil intentions to stop the economic development that has been achieved over long years of work and service to the homeland.

His highness the prime minister said that the recent incidents in Bahrain revealed the nature of our men and the strong cohesion in our country, which rejects violence, sabotage, and terrorism.

His highness added that the large-scale support for Bahrain that was demonstrated inside and outside the country is evidence of the defeat of terrorism and the intentions and objectives of those behind it.

The prime minister noted world consensus on fighting terrorism, with the exception of a very few who have an interest in sheltering the elements of terrorism and sabotage.

His highness the prime minister praised the high national spirit demonstrated by the workers of the Diplomat Hotel, as well as their distinguished efforts in repairing the damage in a very short time. This, the prime minister added, shows the real nature of the sons of this country, whose strength is evident during crises and difficulties.

We are honored to see the sons of our country confront this terrorism and destruction, the prime minister said. He added that the sons of this country reject any tampering with the future and the achievements of the homeland or with the interests of its citizens. The honest sons of this country are the only ones who protect it, the prime minister said. [passage omitted]

Bahrain: Car Bomb Reportedly Explodes in 'Isa

JN1402142396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1412 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An urgent report that we received a short while ago said a booby-trapped car exploded near a commercial center in 'Isa city in the State of Bahrain today.

AFP quoted an official source in Bahrain as saying that the explosion did not cause any casualties.

Bahrain: Saudi Deputy Prime Minister Voices Support

JN1302164796 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1400 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 13 Feb (WAKH) — Bahraini Heir Apparent His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, general commander of the Bahraini Defense Forces, received a telephone call from his brother His Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

His Highness Prince Sultan voiced his condemnation of all the subversive and terrorist actions that seek to harm Bahrain and its people. His highness emphasized Saudi Arabia's support for Bahrain and for all the measures it has taken to protect its citizens and safeguard Bahrain's security and stability. His highness wished Bahrain continued progress and prosperity under the leadership of his highness the amir.

Bahrain: Paper Condemns 'Heinous' Acts, Calls For Firm Action

JN1402102996 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0800 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 14 Feb (WAKH) — The Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM asserts in today's issue that the large-scale popular support which Bahrain

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got from all brothers and friends in confronting the remnants of sabotage groups and the public rejection of these groups' actions has had the greatest effect in tightening their isolation as they desperately tried to express themselves through various means and methods, thus revealing their true nature, which is based on using violence and terrorism to achieve their foreign-inspired aims and goals.

The paper says that this popular support is proof of the defeat of terrorism. Referring to his highness the prime minister's statement at the scene of the incident yesterday, the paper says: This is a defeat for their intentions and goals that are aimed at harming the development and economic growth which have been achieved over many years of continuous work and dedicated efforts in serving the homeland.

The paper adds: The peace which Bahrain enjoys has embittered the envious in the region. They are not happy to see this cohesion between the leadership and the people in confronting riots and subversion. So they have instructed their tools to commit this hideous crime against this peaceful people, who have never known such violent practices and who reject them under any name, slogan, or form.

The paper said that combating violence and sabotage to safeguard security and stability is the unwavering determination of this people, as asserted by his highness the prime minister, affirming that there is no room for terrorism in this country. Such heinous practices and acts, the paper adds, will only make us more determined and persistent to renounce this destructive group that only represents an isolated minority that does not belong to the soil of this generous land.

The paper explains: Dealing with this terrorism should rise to the challenges posed by the new activities of this group. This is the demand of every person, home, village, and city in this country. These groups should be dealt with ruthlessly and firmly, as there can be no tolerance or leniency with their evil practices. What we are facing is terrorism. The attack on this homeland is huge and fierce and several parties are taking part in it. This calls for employing all our capabilities and potential so that the cherished drive for development and construction can be resumed.

Concluding, the paper prays to God to protect Bahrain and its people from all evil.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Iraqi Opposition Leader Praises Support

LD1302165396 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1223 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 13 Feb, (KUNA) — Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, praised in a statement published here today Kuwait's humanitarian aid through the Kuwaiti Red Crescent to Iraqi refugees.

Al-Hakim, who is in Kuwait city on a visit, said in an interview with AL-SIYASAH that he had conveyed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti officials for Kuwait's "relief aid to the Iraqi people in Iraq's northern regions and the border regions with Iran, thanks to the relief work of the Kuwaiti Red Crescent."

Al-Hakim also reiterated that Saddam's confrontation is now with whole sections of the [Iraqi] population and pointed out that his regime will lose the fight at the end because it cannot manipulate forever the contradictions [in the Iraqi society] as the latter has become aware of the true nature of regime.

He added, however, that UN Resolution 986 allowing the sale of a portion of Iraqi oil for the purchase of food and medicine for the Iraqi population is a good decision if it is properly implemented and if the aim of such a resolution to distinguish between besieging the regime and the population is respected. The Iraqi people should not be held responsible for crimes committed by the regime, he added. This distinction is upheld though the purchase of food for the population.

On the other hand, Hakim told today's AL-QABAS that the opportunity for a change in Iraq is still a reality. He referred to "the unity of the Iraqi people in standing up to the regime as Ramadi area had seen momentous events, Abu Ghurayb area had seen a military mutiny in addition to the tremendous change in the position of the Iraqi army where important elements had joined the opposition folds and the regime had declared a state of full alert five times. The Iraqi regime had made a number of concessions reflected in the false referendum, declaring plurality in Iraq and other moves which aimed at containing the situation."

He added that "the position of the United Nations has become clear after the true intentions of the Iraqi regime in committing aggression against neighboring countries and continuing the production of mass destructive weapons were exposed."

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Yemen

Yemen: Envoy Meets Arab League Chief on Eritrea Dispute

JN1302194696 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Ahmad Muhammad Luqman, Yemeni ambassador to Egypt and permanent representative to the Arab League, met with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Arab League secretary general, in Cairo today. The two discussed the latest developments resulting from Eritrea's occupation of Yemen's al-Hanish al-Kabir Island. The brother ambassador stressed our country's eagerness to find a peaceful solution to the dispute with Eritrea in order to enhance regional security and avoid tension.

Brother Ambassador Luqman expressed our country's satisfaction with the French mediation efforts. He said Yemen welcomes all efforts to seek a speedy and peaceful solution to the crisis.

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Iraq: Saddam Chairs Cabinet Session on Economy, Education

JN1402132096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Feb (INA)—President Saddam Husayn chaired the cabinet's eighth session in which the economic situation and its positive developments were discussed.

President Saddam Husayn ordered that the dues of the food merchants who signed contracts with the Trade Ministry be paid in cash and in dollars in order to encourage them for their participation in consolidating the current positive results in the local markets and providing food away from greed and at prices that enhance the steadfastness of the forbearing Iraqi people.

His excellency also ordered that the fees on irrigating agricultural lands be reduced by 25 percent in order to support peasants and farmers and prompt them to increase agricultural produce and improve its quality.

In this session, the cabinet decided to continue to limit the expenses for March within the 1996 budget, except for salaries, allocations, and wages which will continue to be exempted from the limitation of expenses for March and the subsequent months.

The cabinet discussed a draft law on production incentives at state departments, and made recommendations to encourage distinguished and creative persons. It also discussed a draft law on incentives for traffic men, which was a topic on its agenda.

Discussing the working hours in the Education Ministry's elementary, intermediate, and preparatory schools, the cabinet approved of having the schools outside the city centers work five days a week, and authorized the education minister to include other schools inside the cities in accordance with rules which will be worked out for this purpose. It was also decided to have the institutes of the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry work five days a week. The cabinet made a host of decisions and recommendations on other topics listed on its agenda.

Iraq: Oil-for-Food Talks Continue

JN1302205696 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 13 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi and UN delegates concluded their session this afternoon and agreed to hold another one tomorrow morning.

Later today, chief Iraqi delegate Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari is expected to brief the nonaligned member states of the Security Council on what was discussed during the sessions. The nonaligned states include Egypt, Indonesia, Chile, Botswana, Guinea-Bissau, and Honduras. Al-Anbari will meet with German Ambassador [Tono Eitel], head of the Sanctions Committee, for the same purpose.

Iraq: al-Anbari Meets Nonaligned Ambassadors at UN

JN1402093096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0815 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 14 Feb (INA)—Dr. 'Abd- al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation [to the talks with the United Nations], met on 13 February with ambassadors of the nonaligned member states of the UN Security Council, as well as the ambassadors of China and Korea.

The meeting was attended by Iraq's Permanent Representative Nizar Hamdun, Egyptian Ambassador Nabil al-'Arabi, Chilean Ambassador Juan Somavia, Guinea Bissau's Ambassador Adelino Mano Queta, Botswana's Ambassador Legwaila Legwaila, Honduras Ambassador Gerardo Martinez Blanco, and Indonesian Charge d'Affaires Makarim Wibzono [name as transliterated]. South Korea's Ambassador Su-gil Park [name as transliterated] and China's Ambassador Qin Huasun attended the meeting in observer capacity.

Following the meeting, Dr. al-Anbari said that he briefed the ambassadors of the UN Security Council member states on Iraq's position toward the current dialogue with the United Nations.

In his capacity as coordinator among the nonaligned member states of the Security Council, Chile's Ambassador Somavia told journalists that Dr. al-Anbari told the ambassadors that the Iraqi delegation came to the talks with good intentions to arrive at an acceptable agreement while the delegation is at the United Nations.

Ambassador Somavia said the Iraqi delegation proposed three main points to the nonaligned group. First, that they are not intent on changing or amending Resolution 896, but seek to find means to implement it. Second, that they feel what should be done is to move from the phase of the resolution to the phase of a working mechanism according to which the resolution can be implemented. Third, that they plan to act with all good intentions and through all necessary means to arrive at an agreement with the secretary general's representatives.

The Chilean ambassador said the Iraqi delegation listened to remarks by some of the ambassadors over certain issues, but said they would not discuss details before an agreement is reached.

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He added that the Iraqi delegation is "acting with good will during the negotiations and they are trying to arrive at a satisfactory agreement." He said the Iraqi delegation is expected to stay in the United Nations until an agreement is reached with the UN General Secretariat.

The Chilean Ambassador did not rule out the possibility that the nonaligned ambassadors will raise the issue of the talks with Iraq during their meeting with Secretary General Butrus Ghali. He said that the ambassadors will seek to learn about the secretary general's view of the talks.

The Chilean ambassador reaffirmed to the journalists that he is convinced that the Iraqi delegation will continue its talks with the General Secretariat delegation until an agreement is reached.

Iraq: Minister—UNSC Should Respect Commitments

JN1402092496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0852 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Feb (INA)—'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, culture and information minister, asserted that Iraq's great cooperation with the UN Security Council and Iraq's fulfillment of its obligations as stipulated in the UN Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 687, in addition to Arab and international support for this cooperation, makes it incumbent on the Security Council to implement Paragraph 22 of the above resolution as a step toward the complete lifting of the embargo imposed on the Iraqi people.

Answering an INA question on dialogue between Iraq and the United Nations on selling oil to meet humanitarian needs and whether this is an alternative to Iraq's right to implement Paragraph 22, the culture and information minister said: While we hope that the current dialogue between Iraqi and UN delegations on oil to meet humanitarian needs will produce positive results for the people of Iraq, we assert our legitimate right that the Security Council should fulfill its commitments on the implementation of Paragraph 22 of resolution 687, especially since Iraq has honored its commitments to the Security Council resolutions.

Iraq: Federations, Jordanian Industrial Delegation Issue Statement

JN1402141496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Feb (INA)—A Jordanian industrial delegation, the Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce [FICC], and the Iraqi Federation of Industries [IFI] have stressed the need for quickly lifting the unjust blockade and ending the Iraqi people's suffering due to the severe shortage of food, medicine, and other requirements of life, now that Iraq has fully responded to the UN resolutions.

In a joint statement issued following a visit to Iraq by a Jordanian industrial delegation—a statement which was signed for the Jordanian side by Khaldun Abu-Hassan, head of the Amman Chamber of Industry, and for the Iraqi side by Zuhayr 'Abd-al-Ghafur Yunis, head of the FICC, and Engineer 'Adnan al-Qudsi, head of the IFI— the three parties emphasized the continued coordination of their positions at the conferences held by the Arab chambers and the organizations of Arab and international employers.

They also stressed the importance of Arab economic cooperation in confronting the international economic groups and the challenges of this phase which are imposed by the agreements of GATT, the World Trade Organization, and the international standard specifications,

The joint statement also stressed the importance of enhancing the industrial investments established in Jordan in order to supply the Iraqi market with the commodities it needs, stemming from the distinguished relations between both sides.

Khaldun Abu-Hassan and the accompanying delegation left Baghdad today after a three-day visit to Iraq at the invitation of the FICC and IFI.

In a statement to an INA correspondent, Abu-Hassan said that the delegation held talks with officials in the Ministries of Industry and Minerals, Trade, Health, Agriculture, and Finance on promoting and enhancing the economic and trade relations between both fraternal countries in various fields.

He added that the delegation signed joint economic minutes between the Amman Chamber of Industry and the FICC and IFI in order to promote economic activities between the Iraqi trade community and the Jordanian industrialists and to seriously work for removing the negative aspects impeding the economic march.

Abu-Hassan lauded the Iraqis' efforts and militant determination to foil the blockade and its evil intentions targeting Iraq's great achievements which were realized by its gigantic revolution.

Iraq: Ports Said Ready To Receive Vessels

JN1402114696 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0920 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Feb (INA)—A technical officer confirmed that the Iraqi shipping lane is

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safe and ready to receive the ships and vessels carrying foodstuffs and medicines.

Jamil Ibrahim, under secretary of the Transport and Communications Ministry, said that the depth of the shipping lane in Khawr al-Zubayr and Umm Qasr port is suitable for the entry and anchorage of large vessels.

Sources at the Iraqi ports said al-Ma'qil port will become operational next month. The port was out of service for 15 years. Hasan Fulayh Khalaf, director general of the ports, said the port will be ready to receive vessels that have small and medium payloads — not exceeding 3,000 tonnes — and a five-meter draft.

Port facilities used for unloading shipments at quays and for receiving the vessels have been stranded in Shatt al-'Arab since the Iranian aggression against Iraq in 1980.

Iraq: Oil Minister on Production Capacities, Prices

JN1302212196 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 26 Jan 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Oil Minister Engineer 'Amir Muhammad Rashid affirmed that Iraq's capacity to produce oil and oil byproducts for export and local consumption is very high. He said Iraq is considered to have the second-largest oil reserves in the world. He added that the country is ready to export 1 million barrels per day within a few days once the leadership issues a directive and that ministry sections are capable of increasing this production to 3.5 million barrels per day.

Speaking last night on a television program devoted to the intentions of leader President Saddam Husayn's 3 December message to the cabinet, Rashid said that by rebuilding oil installations, the Iraqis have foiled all enemy attempts to besiege Iraq and deprive it of its oil products.

The minister explained that consumer prices of oil byproducts were reduced to less than one-tenth of actual cost to help low- income individuals. He said local consumption of oil byproducts rose to 4,500 tonnes per day, compared with a maximum of 3,200 tonnes per day before the 30-sate aggression.

The minister affirmed that the new prices of oil and oil byproducts in Iraq are much lower than those in neighboring states, including oil producers, despite the continuation of the embargo conditions, which have affected the operational capacities of oil installations.

The minister said: Our production of engine oil rose to 110 percent. Car owners can obtained 10 liters of engine oil a month, as of 1 March. He added that owners of diesel-run cars can obtain 50 instead of 40 liters per month, also as of 1 March.

The minister urged citizens to rationalize their consumption of oil byproducts by avoiding waste, in order to reduce our need for hard currencies.

Iraq: Opposition Figures on Perry's Remarks, Change in Regime

NC1302212496 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 10 Feb 96 p 8

[Report by 'Abdallah 'Abd-al-Salam in London]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi opposition leaders in London have emphasized that the ruling regime in Baghdad will be changed from the inside and that the Iraqis do not need foreign troops to overthrow Saddam Husayn. The opposition leaders added that U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry's recent remarks are only an attempt to put pressure on the Iraqi president to accept Security Council Resolution 986, which provides for the sale of oil in exchange for food.

Salih Dajlat, head of the opposition Iraqi Democratic Grouping in London, has told AL-AHRAM that there has been Jordanian-U.S. coordination regarding the Iraqi regime since the Jordanian monarch started to publicly criticize the Iraqi regime last year. He noted that his party believes that this coordination does not serve the interest of the Iraqi people. He stressed that what the Iraqi opposition wants is a democratic regime that reflects Iraqi aspirations, noting that any change coming from the outside would not serve this goal.

Regarding the significance of the U.S. statements, Dajlat said that Jordanian-U.S. pressure could play a role in motivating the opposition forces, particularly those within the Iraqi Army, to carry out some operations against the regime and may encourage some officers to try to overthrow Saddam Husayn. Thus, they will only serve as a catalyst, he added, noting that the change will have to come from within.

Salah al-Shaykhali, spokesman for the opposition Iraqi Reconciliation Movement, has told AL-AHRAM in London that he does not believe that changes will come from outside the country. A more likely scenario would be a change from within led by the Armed Forces, he added. He noted that the recent U.S. statements send a signal to the forces of change inside the country that a change would bring U.S. support because the world views Saddam's regime as an uncivilized regime.

He pointed out that Saddam tells his close associates that the United States and the West still support his regime one way or another and that they want his regime to

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stay. The recent U.S. remarks, he added, deny Saddam's claim.

A prominent Iraqi oppositionist in London has told AL-AHRAM that he believes that the U.S. defense secretary's statement has shocked Jordanian officials. The Americans do not usually talk so openly when it comes to cooperation with other countries to overthrow Saddam Husayn, he added. The Iraqi oppositionist, who declined to be identified, revealed that of the U.S. institutions, the Pentagon is the most enthusiastic about working with Jordan to overthrow Saddam Husayn, unlike the State Department, which has grave doubts about the feasibility of such action. He pointed out that everybody knows that the thought of sending U.S. troops, in coorperation with Jordan, to overthrow Saddam is unlikely, but with such remarks, the United States is putting pressure on Saddam to comply with Resolution 986.

Iraq: Husayn Kamil on Opposition Conference, Saddam's Health

JN1302203996 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 14 Feb 96 p 6

[Interview with Husayn Kamil, son-in-law of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, by unidentified correspondent in Amman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] You have invited the opposition for talks more than once, but you got nowhere. Why?

[Kamil] The opposition is haunted by fear of failure, in addition to its fear that the allies will abandon it.

[Correspondent] But some opposition members say they fear Husayn Kamil himself.

[Kamil] I will not answer that. I said what I have to say.

[Correspondent] There is talk about a conference for the Iraqi opposition in Damascus. Will you reject it, since you rejected a similar call from Amman?

[Kamil] I still refuse to attend any conference for the Iraqi opposition that claims to be concerned about Iraqi interests while openly declaring allegiance to the traditional enemies of Iraq.

[Correspondent] There is a pessimistic tone in your comments that urges us to ask you if the report about your decision to give up politics is true?

[Kamil] That report was somewhat exaggerated and was propagated by quarters that want to cast doubt on Husayn Kamil. Furthermore, I have never been a professional politician in order to quit politics.

[Correspondent] It is said that the difference between you and the opposition was based on power and leadership. They described you as a power maniac, and that is why you opposed Saddam Husayn?

[Kamil] When I left Baghdad for Amman I wanted to convey a message to all honorable Iraqis to rescue them from their tribulation, without having the objective of reaching a powerful position or power in Iraq. Had I wanted this, I would not have left Iraq in the first place. I would have stayed with the regime in Iraq.

[Correspondent] Why have you strongly rejected federation and confederation?

[Kamil] First, those who present these ideas are supported by the Kurds and Iran. This formula will definitely divide Iraq. We seek, after rescuing Iraq, to create a new, strong Iraq in the region, not a proxy.

[Correspondent] It is said that this rejection has affected your presence in Amman, and rumors say that you will leave Amman soon and that you have even threatened to do so?

[Kamil] I do not intend to leave Amman, and I did not threaten to do so. I am staying in accordance with the will of the Jordanian leadership, which has not asked me to leave.

[Correspondent] Will this be your position even if Amman hosts the opposition conference?

[Kamil] Yes, I will not leave Amman even if it hosts the opposition conference.

[Correspondent] Observers see a change in the Jordanian position on Iraq.

[Kamil] I do not know what do you mean by the word change, but if it means the Jordanian political concept toward Iraq, it has not changed.

[Correspondent] Why has the Iraqi opposition failed to realize any substantial achievement on the ground?

[Kamil] This opposition did not interact with the people and establish relations with them. It failed to see the Iraqi situation from within, and therefore, it failed to attract the Iraqi masses and isolated itself from what is going on, satisfying itself with faxing statements from hotel rooms in European capitals. This opposition is far from the people and their suffering, so how can it succeed?

[Correspondent] Why do you insist on not attending the opposition conference?

[Kamil] I am not concerned about attending a conference for the so-called opposition in the conference's

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current form, whether in Amman or elsewhere, because Iraq's future cannot be decided by a handful of traders and agents.

[Correspondent] You reject the conference and you are waiting to see what happens. What is your next step?

[Kamil] There is nothing on the horizon. My practical steps for uniting the honorable opposition have not begun.

[Correspondent] When will these steps begin and how?

[Kamil] I told you that there is nothing on the horizon at present.

[Correspondent] You were close to Saddam Husayn. Does he really have cancer?

[Kamil] The president has been suffering from inflammation and swelling [tawarrumat] of the glands since the mid-1980's. He was treated more than once in Iraq and abroad in the Soviet Union, but I cannot say for sure that the swelling was cancer or another disease.

Iraq: Increase in Antiregime 'Jihad' Operations Examined

NC1302163896 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1450 GMT 13 Feb 96

[Political Talk]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] There has been a qualitative and quantitative rise in jihad operations by the resistance fighters throughout Iraq in the past few weeks. An example of this is in the reports from mujahidin sources within the regime, which admit the rise in the jihad operations. In January 1996 in the Governorate of al-'Amarah alone, resistance fighters sprang more than 50 ambushes in various areas, killing 10 officers and 30 security men and burning 50 vehicles, including 20 military vehicles. [passage omitted]

The area of Tuz Khurmatu in the Governorate of Karkuk is a scene of constant clashes with the regime. A jihad group has killed five security men operating between Tikrit and Tuz Khurmatu. In Qal'at Salih in southern Iraq, resistance fighters liquidated a senior officer of the Political Guidance Department of the 18th Division.

The capital Baghdad did not escape the collision between the mujahidin and the regime's mercenaries. The Baghdad district of al-Shu'lah last week was the scene of an armed clash between a security patrol and a resistance fighter in which two security men were killed.

The above are just examples of the armed confrontations that normally take place on a daily basis. However, the regime is tight-lipped about these incidents to keep morale, which is already low, from deteriorating any further. But the people are aware of these incidents, which they learn about either directly or indirectly.

The reasons for the rise in these operations are many. They relate to the developed techniques and resources used in the jihad operations, the broadening of the resistance's base, the infiltration of the regime's defenses, the growing influence of the resistance, and the improving relations between the resistance fighters and the Armed Forces. Other reasons have to do with the people's feelings toward the regime.

Public resentment of and indignation with the authorities has grown recently because of the deterioration in living standards, the agonizing impact of sanctions on the people, the regime's growing repression, and the nation's despair of any improvement as long as the tyrant stays in power. Another reason for the increase in jihad operations is the developing stance of the military units, where resentment and dissatisfaction are on the rise, a sense of bitterness and humiliation brought about at the hands of this regime is growing, and there is a growing feeling that Iraq needs to be rescued from this longstanding crisis.

Another reason for the rising opposition to the regime is the regime's internal problems. Since the escape of Husayn Kamil, Saddam's partner in tyranny and in power, the cracks within the regime have widened, so much so that it is being reported that Saddam's health has worsened since the defection. This has fueled suspicions that the tyrant is suffering from cancer, signs of which are increasing. The rise in resistance operations worries Saddam too much. It could be one of the important reasons that led Saddam to go along with UN Resolution 986 in fear of a popular explosion and further cracks.

Iraq: Drop in Stock Market Share Values Reported

JN1302215796 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 27 Jan 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Share values in the Baghdad Stock Exchange Market dropped by 20 percent compared with the previous week, but the number of transacted shares rose to more than 15 million due to this drop.

The drop in share values is attributed to the rise in the real value of the Iraqi dinar. Still, this drop is limited compared with the big drop in the general level of prices on the local market.

The number of shares transacted early this week amounted to 15,150,621, involving a total volume of 72,484,889 dinars, while the number of firms dealing in these shares reached 54, including 22 industrial, 10 agricultural, 16 service, and six banking firms.

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Israel: Baraq on Iraq, Iran Nonconventional Threat

TA1402094896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Marilyn Henry]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq expressed concern yesterday that easing international sanctions on Iraq could allow Baghdad to pursue weapons programs.

Israel does not oppose humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people, Baraq said at the United Nations. However, the Iraqis "represent in their behavior, especially in regard to the nonconventional capabilities, a major threat to the future stability not only of the Middle East, but of the whole world order."

The UN should "make sure that Saddam Husayn would not reemerge as a nuclear phoenix from the ashes of his defeat in the Gulf War five years ago," Baraq said on the last day of his visit to the US.

Iraq, which has been under UN sanctions since the invasion of Kuwait, has been discussing a plan that would allow Baghdad to sell $2 billion worth of oil over six months to buy civilian supplies.

Baraq conferred privately with the head of the UN special commission in charge of scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction Rolf Ekeus.

[Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew on 14 February in a page 2 report by Miryam Fox in New York also quotes Foreign Minister Baraq as telling the Security Council that "within seven to eight years Iran will have the necessary knowhow and initial capability to manufacture nuclear weapons. Baraq stressed the danger that Iran constitutes to the world order and the Middle East and expressed the hope that the Security Council would resolve to supervise the development of nonconventional weapons in Iran similar to the resolution on Iraq."]

At a breakfast meeting with delegates representing Security Council members and some Arab states, Baraq said there was slow, steady progress in the talks with Syria.

When asked if he foresaw UN monitors after an Israeli-Syrian agreement, the foreign minister said he hoped such monitors would not be necessary.

If Damascus and Jerusalem agreed to have observers, "our natural tendency would be to call on the Americans," a spokesman quoted Baraq as saying. However, Baraq added, it was premature to discuss the need for observers.

When Nabil al-'Arabi, the Egyptian envoy to the UN, asked about Israel's efforts toward a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, Baraq said other matters were more urgent. These included the implementation of the agreements with Jordan and the Palestinians and the talks with Syria.

Asked how the UN could assist the peace process, Baraq said the UN had a role in providing economic and humanitarian aid, and in generating support for the process. But, he said, the issues must be dealt with in bilateral talks between the parties.

Israel: Peres Solution Sees Water for Syria From Turkey

TA1402094796 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Michal Yudelman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A solution to the water dispute between Israel and Syria would be for Syria to get its water from Turkey, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said yesterday.

Peres, who kicked off his election campaign yesterday under heavy security with a visit to Netanya, said Israel will not give up its northern water sources in an agreement with Syria.

"Without solving the water problems we won't agree to any settlement. That's self-evident. We have only two lakes altogether. One of them is dead — the Dead Sea — and I am not going to endanger the life of the other one," Peres told 12th graders at the town's cultural center.

One possible solution, Peres said, is that "Syria get its water from Turkey and we keep all the water sources at our disposal today."

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 14 February in a page 7 report by Yosi Bar in Rome and 'Amir Papierblatt adds that the prime minister said yesterday during a visit to a military exercise in the south that "he foresees the end of 'the dictatorial regime' of President al-Asad in Syria. Asked whether al-Asad's regime is sufficiently stable to sign a peace accord with Israel, Peres said: "Al-Asad said recently in a meeting with Christopher that he knows exactly what the difference between Israel and Syria is: That our GNP is $16,000 per capita, while theirs is only $1,000. The Syrians now aspire to economic and not strategic equality. In the future, television will bring about the revolution, just as it did in Russia and Romania. The young generation sees different ways of life elsewhere and asks: Why is that not the situation here? Syria will

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also be opened up. No dictatorial regime can continue blinding the people."]

Asked why the government is continuing negotiations with those who want to turn Jerusalem into their capital, Peres said he has no interest in discussing Jerusalem at this time.

"There is something so hysterical in the issue of Jerusalem. There's no need for hysteria. Jerusalem is by law under Israeli sovereignty. Some people are trying to split the nation in the name of a united Jerusalem. Jerusalem is not only united, it is also a uniting factor. Why must they create an impression throughout the world that we're divided? I don't know a single person who is ready to divide Jerusalem in two," he said.

For security reasons, the pupils were brought to the hall more than two hours before Peres's arrival and were carefully examined by electronic devices. The pupils were only allowed to rest rooms with a security guard escort.

Peres finally arrived, tightly surrounded by guards.

He refused to say whether his life is still being threatened, but said "apparently there are still small groups who may take violent action and one must take precautions. I have no choice. Something happened — a murder — and I must abide by the security men's instructions."

Israel: IDF Intelligence Chief on Syria-Hizballah, PA-Terror Issues

TA1302173896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The head of military intelligence says the Palestinian Authority [PA] is drawing up a blacklist of alleged Israeli violations of the Oslo agreement, and is calling for a mass protest rally this Thursday [15 February]. Appearing before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Major General Moshe Ya'alon also said the Syrians were directly involved in determining when Hizballah stops attacks on the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] in southern Lebanon.

David Ze'ev reports:

The military intelligence chief told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee there is clear proof that Hizballah activity in southern Lebanon is directly tied to Syrian interests in the negotiations with Israel. Maj. Gen. Ya'alon is quoted by a Knesset source at the closed-door meeting. He said there have been four breaks recently in Hizballah activity — during the first round of peace talks at Wye Plantation; during the second round of the negotiations; while U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was in the Middle East; and during the trip to Israel by U.S. Vice President Al Gore. Gen. Ya'alon said: The instructions to Hizballah to stop attacks come from Syria.

The head of the IDF intelligence was pessimistic about the negotiations with Damascus. He said Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has a one-track mind: that Israel withdraw to the June 4th 1967 boundary, and then we'll talk about the rest. As far as al-Asad is concerned, he said, this situation could go on for years. The intelligence chief also believes that the Syrian president would prefer not to have an agreement than to have an early warning station stuck in his territory.

Concerning the Palestinians, Gen. Ya'alon said the PA is preparing a blacklist of Israeli violations, including land seizures, quarry excavations, and road construction. He said the PA has called for a demonstration this Thursday to protest against what are seen as land seizures by Israel. As for Palestinian terrorism, Ya'alon said that whenever the Authority has information on a possible attack, it does everything to arrest the people involved; attacks are not in their interest. But, Gen. Ya'alon said, the PA is not working to eradicate the terrorist phenomenon altogether.

Israel: Energy Minister Views Russia-Israel Pipeline Plan

TA1302112596 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 13 Feb 96 p 8

[Report by Rachel Neiman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Energy Minister Gonen Segev will consider a $2 billion Russian-Israeli gas pipeline that has been proposed by an international consortium.

A consortium made up of local fuel importer Del-Men, Turkish petroleum pipeline corporation BOTAS, Russian gas company Gazprom and TransCanada Pipelines met yesterday with Segev to present a schedule for construction of the proposed pipeline.

The consortium is ready to begin negotiating the details in November.

The project, called Lasserre, would carry natural gas via existing pipelines from gas fields on the Armenian/Georgian border to the northeastern corner of Turkey.

A line would then be constructed through central Turkey to link up with existing pipes leading to Ankara and southwards to Iskenderun.

From southern Turkey, the pipeline would run underwater for 480 kilometers at depths of up to 1,800 meters

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outside the territorial waters of Syria and Lebanon and would enter Israel at three points — the electric power plants at Haifa, Tel Aviv and Ashdod.

Consortium representatives also met with the Israel Electric Corporation's natural gas division yesterday evening.

TransCanada senior VP Jake Epp said the pipeline could be completed by the end of 1999.

Gazprom is the world's largest producer of natural gas, supplying 40 percent of Europe's natural gas.

During the breakup of the USSR, Gazprom continued supplying its customers without interruption — proof of the company's stability and reliability as a partner, Del-Men president Yosef Ram said.

TransCanada has been involved in several underseas pipeline projects, including the 1,600-km. long Gulf-South Asia project that transports gas from Qatar to Pakistan.

"Even if there was peace with Lebanon and Syria, it's still more cost effective to go underwater," said Ram.

Third partner BOTAS holds sole rights to both transport and purchase of natural gas and crude oil in Turkey.

As compared with the proposed Egyptian pipeline currently under negotiation, Ram said all members of his consortium "could sign immediately without complicated legislation."

The proposal, which took two years to formulate, projects initial imports of up to four or five billion cubic meters of gas to Israel and 10 billion cubic meters to the Turkish market.

Market development is key, said Ram. "We see the nations on either side of the underwater pipeline as potential markets," he said. "While Cyprus is small, Lebanon is a most attractive market (capable of consuming) quantities no less than those of the Israeli market."

He added that Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority were other potential customers.

"Gas is not cheap," said Gazprom's head of foreign economic relations Nikolay Belyi, "but it will be competitive with other energy sources."

He saw the heavy smog blanketing Tel Aviv and added that "the Turkish ambassador told us it took only two years to clean the skies of Ankara," following the widespread use of natural gas for electricity production.

Israel: Commentary Views Pentagon, State's Stands as 'Hostile'

TA1302130396 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 13 Feb 96 p B1

[Article by Aluf Ben: "Cracks in the Alliance"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The sympathy toward Israel displayed by the Clinton administration does not override the negative sentiments toward it in the Pentagon and State Department. One example of this attitude was provided by the "letter on espionage" in which U.S. Defense Department suppliers were warned against contacts with Israelis, who aim to spy on America and steal its technological secrets.

The hostile letter was stashed away in the wake of a pro-Israeli organization's intervention with the highest administration echelons. Yet its presentation as an unauthorized official's error may be misleading. Debra Herniak, who works for the Pentagon's Department of Investigation, reflected the profound suspiciousness — perhaps even hostility — which many of her colleagues in the administration's middle and low levels feel toward Israel.

The defense establishment has grown used to the dynamics: Israeli requests for advanced technologies or for permits for the export of weapon systems containing American components to a third country encounter red tape at the professional levels. Affirmative answers are received only after intervention by senior political echelons, a process that reinforces the prevailing view that professional decisions are defeated by the magical impact of the Jews and of Israel on the political echelons.

The negative sentiments toward Israel have deep roots. Some remember the 1973 airlift that emptied U.S. emergency warehouses in Europe for the benefit of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. Others believe the Pollard affair was the turning point. Officials involved in arms control have never been fond of Israel because of its nuclear procurement. At the same time, admiration for the IDF dissipated with time. The Bush-Baker administration used the defense card to pressure the Likud government into political concessions. This resulted in the appearance of dozens of publications and books that presented the Israelis as the receivers of generous aid, as a nation which, although dependent on the United States, bites the hand that feeds it at every opportunity, by committing espionage, theft, and deceit.

The Clinton administration believes that hugs and support for Israel are more beneficial than pressure. The visits to Washington of Yitzhaq Rabin, and recently of Peres, were always accompanied by pledges of defense

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and technological aid. The IDF has received a gift of a large quantity of weapons, financing for Arrow missile development for the next few years has been guaranteed, and an Israeli astronaut is about to float in space.

The defense establishment under the leadership of Rabin and David 'Ivri strove, in the past few years, to coordinate its policies with the United States and refrained from engaging in moves liable to anger Washington. Yet whenever the Americans believed their interest to be paramount, they used a firm and forceful approach.

For the past six years, Israel Aircraft Industries has been trying to sell the Shavit rocket as a satellite launcher in the United States. All its efforts encountered a brick wall. At first the administration contended that it does not want to encourage Israeli rocket development. Clinton permitted Israeli participation in the launch of civilian satellites, but army tenders remained out of bounds.

So far, the administration has refused Israel free access to satellite photography and has not been happy about the development of the Israeli space program. Yet, despite the fact that the Ofeq 3 satellite was developed without U.S. assistance, Rabin and Peres decided to coordinate Israel's space policy with the United States and to ask the Americans not to sell satellites and satellite photographs to Arab countries. The administration demanded, in return, that Israel refrain from selling the Ofeq photographs, arguing that commercializing the military satellite would be unfair competition with American companies that financed similar projects out of their own pockets.

The administration conducted tough negotiations, which were exploited for collecting information on the Israeli satellite's capabilities and for preventing its introduction into the promising market of commercial satellite photography. The U.S. stand jeopardizes the future of the Israeli project, which is in dire need of further financing.

Some defense establishment officials believe that the United States has been using political pretexts to disguise its objection to Israeli weapon exports, which are seen as competition. The Americans have been exerting persistent pressures against Israel's ties with China and India.

The pressure was at its highest in the affair of the "Chinese Lavi" — a combat aircraft developed by China with Israeli assistance based on Lavi aircraft technologies. About once a month, leaks attributed to "Pentagon officials" are published, citing the administration's growing concern about China's power built with Russian and Israeli assistance, and suspicions that Israel has transferred American technology to Chinese aircraft developers. All Israeli explanations — that it is an old deal, that the sales to China have dwindled considerably, and that they contain no American components — have been to no avail.

Israel consented to the establishment of a joint committee that will examine charges of the theft of U.S. technologies. Israel was exonerated (although not publicly) on all counts, except one: the Chinese aircraft. The Americans' questions, which became more intrusive as time went by, arouse doubts as to whether they really suspect that this technology, obsolete in any event, was transferred, or whether it is a cynical attempt to collect intelligence. A U.S. inspection team headed by Martha Harris from the State Department will arrive here for another round of talks at the end of the month. Israel is torn between the need to please the United States and the fear of offending the Chinese.

The alliance with America has become a key foundation of Israel's foreign policy, and with good reason. Yet the relationship must not be evaluated only in light of the generous aid bills and the President's declarations of support, ignoring other factors that act to Israel's detriment. The defense establishment and the Foreign Ministry must attend to the roots of the problem and find channels to the administration's middle levels. They must not rely solely on the Jewish lobby and the pressures from above.

Israel: MK 'Azran Breaks From SHAS, Plans To Form Party

TA1302114996 Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew 13 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by ITIM and Uri Rodriguez-Garcia]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Knesset Member [MK] Yosef 'Azran, who quit SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim], announced yesterday that he intends to set up a new religious party that will run in the upcoming Knesset elections. MK's Yosef Ba-Gad and Avraham Verdiger, as well as former MK Eli'ezer Mizrahi, will join his list.

MK Ba-Gad, who announced yesterday that he will be running for the premiership, recently had a falling-out with Moledet leader Rehav'am Ze'evi. Mizrahi, a member of the Habad Hasidic movement, ran in the last elections on an independent list which did not win the majority necessary for a Knesset seat.

Sources close to MK 'Azran confirmed that contacts regarding their integration in the new list are indeed under way with the three. [passage omitted]

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Israel: Sharansky Enters Knesset Race; Party Could Win 4-6 Seats

TA1202091896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 12 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Jerusalem Post Staff]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ten years to the day after he arrived in Israel, former Prisoner of Zion Natan Sharansky yesterday formally entered the race for the Knesset.

The leadership of his movement, Yisra'el Ba'aliya [Israel on the Rise], unanimously decided to become a political party and run in the upcoming elections. According to recent polls, an immigrant party is likely to win four to six Knesset seats.

Internal elections to select the 1,500 delegates to the party's convention, scheduled in mid-March, will be held at the end of the month. The convention will choose a 400-member central committee, which will select the Knesset list.

"This is the natural extension of our struggle to promote aliya in the Soviet Union," Sharansky said. "We want to make this country not merely a place of refuge, but a land which attracts Diaspora Jews because it offers a high quality of life and extensive opportunities."

[Tel Aviv VESTI in Russian on 12 February, in an unattributed front-page report, adds that "so far, approximately 30,000 persons have registered as members of Yisra'el Ba'aliya."]

Israel: Article—Accord With Canada May Harm U.S. Accord

TA1302143696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 13 Feb 96 p C6

[Report by Gad Peretz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yoram Blizovsky, director general of Israel Manufacturers Association, has demanded that Industry and Trade Minister Mikha Harish not hurry to sign the free trade agreement with Canada.

Blizovsky claims that concessions to the Canadians on the rules of origin issue will harm our free trade agreement with the United States. He claims that "Canada's demand for an agreement on rules of origin based on shifting from one tariff definition to another and not on the basis of the value added criterion — as is the case of the Israel-U.S. free trade agreement — may lead the United States to pressure Israel into changing the system."

The Americans want to change the system of rules of origin and to move to the tariff shift system worked out with Canada. So far Israel has managed to convince the United States to avoid changing the system — a thing that would mostly harm the textile industry. If Israel accepts the Canadian demand, U.S. pressure will be resumed — and this may harm Israeli exports to the United States, according to Blizovsky.

Blizovsky claims that the United States is a more important target for Israeli exports than Canada, therefore the U.S. consideration should dictate the agreement with Canada, which should not be regarded as standing on its own in this case.

Blizovsky added that recently the Industry and Trade Ministry has encouraged exporters to push the Canadian free trade deal. These exporters view the deal in the narrow context of our relations with Canada while ignoring the broader picture. The Manufacturers Association believes that the trade agreement with Canada should be changed without harming the agreement with the United States.

Sources in the Industry and Trade Ministry say Minister Harish is examining this particular point in the draft agreement worked out by the two delegations. "Harish is giving this issue considerable thought," they said.

The growth in Israeli-Canadian trade continued during January-September 1995. Exports to Canada reached $136 million, an increase of 27 percent in comparison to the same period the year before. The main exporters to Canada are Nilit, Teva', Motorola, and AGREXCO.

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Jordan: King Husayn 'Upset' at Not Seeing King Fahd

MM1302155696 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 13 Feb 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Husayn Left Saudi Arabia Suddenly Because He Could Not Meet With Fahd"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, London, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI — King Husayn of Jordan suddenly cut short his visit to Saudi Arabia and left holy Mecca yesterday at 0300, arriving in Amman at 0500.

Sources from the large delegation that accompanied Husayn — it included 40 political and media figures — stressed that the king was "upset" because of his failure to meet with King Fahd to achieve the most important aim of the visit, namely reconciliation between the two countries at the highest levels, even though a Husayn-Fahd meeting was on the official agenda of the visit, which is why Jordanian Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir stressed a few days before the visit that the meeting would take place.

MENA said King Fahd received President Husni Mubarak after Mubarak performed 'umrah [minor pilgrimage] and that Mubarak left Mecca a few hours before the Jordanian monarch's arrival.

Political circles in Jordan recall that during the Ramadan before last, King Husayn returned "angry" from holy Mecca following a similar visit because he was not received officially in Saudi Arabia and because he could not meet with King Fahd. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Prince Hasan, Planning Minister Meet Israel's Savir

JN1302200396 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The activities of the Jordanian-Israeli-U.S. tripartite committee and international investment in Jordan and the region were at the center of discussions between His Highness Crown Prince Hasan and Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, in Amman this morning. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti.

The talks also dealt with the results of Amman Economic Conference, particularly with regard to courting the international private sector to invest in Jordan in particular and in the region in general. The two sides also broached the necessary mechanism to implement the bilateral agreements that were signed between the two sides last month.

The Israeli side entrusted Savir to follow up the tripartite committee and the regional economic projects with Jordan.

Savir also met with Planning Minister Dr. Rima Khalaf. They reviewed the implementation of a number of major joint projects, especially water and bridge projects. They also discussed the regional economic foundations that will be established, particularly the task force for regional economic development.

It was agreed to hold another meeting at the technical level to complete necessary measures to begin implementing these projects as soon as possible.

Jordan: Israel's Savir Comments on Talks, Departs

JN1402095196 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 14 Feb 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Amy Henderson]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—A senior Israeli Official left Jordan yesterday following a two-day working visit to the Kingdom, the first by a high-ranking Israeli official since the Kingdom's new government was sworn in and since the two countries concluded their five remaining bilateral accords in mid-January stipulated by the 1994 peace treaty.

During a press briefing before leaving Amman, Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli foreign ministry, said he and Jordanian officials explored possible methods of implementing the bilateral agreements and the joint projects in the Dead Sea, Red Sea, and the Jordan Valley.

"We want to explore the implementation of agreements in order to exploit the potential of expanding economic relations," Mr. Savir said. "We also discussed how our relationship can be used in a regional framework and how it relates to the Palestinian Authority."

Mr. Savir expressed disappointment with progress in getting regional and bilateral projects underway since the conclusion of the Middle East and North Africa Economic summit hosted in Amman in October. That event, it was hoped would see the birth of several private sector endeavours that would stimulate the region's precarious economies.

"We now have a certain period of experience with each other and we see the achievements and the problems," he said. "Time has come to put into work the existing economic potential—we did well in project development, but we can do better in attracting private sector involvement. We didn't attract the business people that came to (the summit)."

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Jordan and Israel are now holding talks in preparation for the Cairo economic summit, the follow up to the Amman summit, scheduled for the end of this year. But he said both parties should put more emphasis on economic projects and on enhancing trade among Jordan, the Gulf states, and Israel.

He said also that Israel was sensitive to Jordan's desire to expand trade with the West Bank, which to date is hindered by Israeli security measures at the Shaykh Husayn and King Husayn crossing points.

"This economic relationship has greater potential," he said, adding that a committee is being established to deal with the issue of trade between the three parties and that both Japan and Germany have expressed an interest in expanding the bridges and installing state of the art facilities for the transport of goods across the bridges.

On the Syrian-Israeli talks front, Mr. Savir, who leads the Israeli delegation, said negotiations between the two sides are moving ahead in areas of normalisation of relations but "we have just started to tackle difficult issues such as security arrangements."

Syria and Israel are scheduled to resume talks at the end of this month, and Mr. Savir said that it was doubtful that Israeli elections, now set for May 28, would influence their progress. He admitted though that "serious gaps" in the positions of the two sides remain.

He denied that Israel was being pressured by the U.S. to arrive at some agreement or declaration of principles as the presidential election campaign got underway in that country. Although any progress on the Syrian track would be considered a foreign policy success for President Bill Clinton and his administration, Mr. Savir said that the U.S. "doesn't view (the Israeli-Syrian talks) with an electoral eye."

Jordan: Terrorism Advisory to Israeli Tourists Criticized

TA1402070896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jordan has sharply criticized a warning issued by Yig'al Pressler, the prime minister's adviser on counterterrorism, to Israeli tourists visiting the kingdom. A senior Jordanian source said that Amman is concerned the step could hurt tourism. Israel's ambassador in Amman, Professor Shim'on Shamir, was also critical of the warning.

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Lebanon: Buwayz Denies 'Secret' Deals With Syria

MM1402091296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Feb 96 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Buwayz: Lebanon Has Not Signed Secret Agreements With Syria; Early Israeli Elections in Peres' Interest"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has denied that Lebanon and Syria signed any "secret or open" agreements during the recent session of the Higher Lebanese-Syrian Council, saying that "this issue has been exploited in Lebanon's internal game."

During his meeting yesterday with the Lebanese Editors' Union Council chaired by Captain Mulhim Karam, Buwayz said: "Rumors about the Higher Lebanese-Syrian Council have been used for a political motive completely at odds with reality. What was actually discussed was a precise, clear, and written agenda, leaving no room for interpretations or clarifications. The first item concerns the budget and the second deals with the waters of the (Lebanese) 'Ayn al-Labwah spring. Some clarifications and interpretations were put forward on whether to consider this spring a tributary of the al-'Asi river, and whether it should be included in the distribution of this river's waters between the two countries, since it dries up in the summer and no longer flows into it. Lebanon demanded that the distribution be adjusted by leaving the al-Labwah spring out of it. The Lebanese view was accepted for political and moral reasons, aside from any technical consideration."

He added: "The review of this agreement was in the interest of Lebanon, which has been guaranteed some 45 million cubic meters more than its [previous] share."

Buwayz indicated that there is an understanding between Lebanon and Syria to examine in future two agreements which concern guaranteeing investments and avoiding dual taxation. He said: "These are agreements that Lebanon has made with more than 20 countries, and if one day they are signed with Syria, this would serve Lebanon's interest because it would guarantee future Lebanese investments in Syria and exempt Lebanese companies from paying taxes in Syria if they choose to pay them in Lebanon."

He stressed that everything that has been said on secret or nonsecret agreements signed in Damascus is "untrue." In his view "the Higher Council has been exploited in Lebanon's internal political game, and public opinion has been misled with regard to issues that were not raised at all."

Minister Buwayz believes that the technical report, recently approved in the ministerial council, concerning the possibility of using Lebanese space for television and radio stations "should have preceded the political decision, in other words it should have come devoid of any purpose or direction, so that the ministerial council is left to decide later on political considerations."

He said: "I opposed the technical report because the issue seems to be a fait accompli and we are now dealing with the names of the stations which have been authorized. However, this does not mean that I do not support regulating the media. I am not in favor of having 52 television stations and more than 100 radio stations, but I know that the technical report or the book of conditions can be amended according to any political decision and the crucial factor rests with the standards to be adopted. Thus far, there are no precise or specific standards."

Minister Buwayz said that "progress has been achieved in the Syrian-Israeli negotiations toward confirming some major items, although some details are still in dispute." He added: "It is true that this progress falls short of what was expected, but the mere fact that there is progress, whatever its pace, is a political matter. These negotiations are not taking place only at the level of delegations, but also through Christopher's visits to the government and leadership, because political directives result from these visits and the delegations' negotiations reflect them."

Buwayz reasserted that "to get the Lebanese file under way in the negotiations will require first that political progress is achieved in the Syrian-Israeli file, in addition to an invitation from the U.S. sponsor which times the negotiations to suit itself." He added. "This, however, does not mean that the continuation of the negotiations needs a peace agreement between Syria and Israel, instead just an understanding on security arrangements and withdrawal."

He indicated that "holding early Israeli elections serves the interests of Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres who benefits from the fact that his government has not ended yet."

Lebanon: Clashes Reported in West al-Biqa', South

NC1402091196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli acts of aggression against the south and Western al-Biqa' continue. According to reports this morning, the enemy positions directed machine-gun fire in the areas around them and dropped flares.

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Lebanese Army antiaircraft guns fired at a formation of Israeli military aircraft that flew low over the central sector in the south.

Lebanese fishermen's boats off the coast of al-Qulaylah south of Tyre came under fire from an Israeli gunboat. One boat was hit.

Samir Mubarak, Lebanon's permanent envoy at the United Nations, submitted a report to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Butrus Ghali detailing the Israeli acts of aggression against the south and western al-Biqa' during the second half of January 1996. He explained the Lebanese Government's policy, which strongly condemns these arbitrary acts that constitute flagrant aggression against Lebanon's sovereignty and independence. He demanded that the report be circulated as an official document of the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

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Syria: Talks Begin With Iraq on Euphrates, Turkish Stance

NC1302140196 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 10 Feb 96 pp 1, 13

[Report by 'Ali Jamalu in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syrian-Iraqi technical talks on the waters of the Euphrates River and the dispute with Turkey over this issue will begin in Damascus today.

An Iraqi delegation led by 'Abd-al-Sattar Sulayman, first under secretary at the Irrigation Ministry, arrived in Damascus by land via Jordan yesterday. The delegation includes three experts, one of them the director of the Foreign Ministry's legal department. The delegation was received at the Dar'a border point by Engineer 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Masri, deputy director of the International Waters Bureau of the Syrian Irrigation Ministry.

The Syrian delegation to the talks will be headed by Ibrahim Makhkhul, director general of the Euphrates Basin Authority, and will include Munib al-Rifa'i, director of the Foreign Ministry's legal department, and Muhammad Hasbani, director of the International Waters Bureau of the Irrigation Ministry.

Syrian sources say the two sides will discuss the water problem with Turkey, which is not adhering to Syria's and Iraq's share of the Euphrates water and polluting the river with chemicals. Pollution has reached 1,800 milligrams per liter, exceeding the internationally permitted level by 125 percent. [passage omitted]

In a statement to AL-SAFIR, al-Rifa'i said Syria and Iraq have identical views on this subject and that the Syrian side adheres to Iraq's share, which, according to an agreement, depends on the river flow. He added that the Arab League Council has two items on its agenda—establishing a water center in Damascus and discussing developments in the Euphrates River issue. Al-Rifa'i expressed astonishment at statements issued recently by the under secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry that Ankara had invited Syria and Iraq to discuss the Euphrates issue but that the two countries requested a postponement. He said: "We have invited the Turkish side three times and handed the ambassador in Damascus an official memorandum but to no avail."

On the possibility of a meeting between Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf on the sidelines of the Arab League Council meeting, al-Rifa'i said: "The Iraqi side has submitted this proposal through Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid to discuss the water issue specifically. But Syria has left this subject to the Arab League Council." He added: "We do not disagree on the Euphrates water. We will go to Cairo and discuss this subject." Al-Rifa'i drew a line between a "possible" meeting in Cairo and the experts' meetings in Damascus today, saying "these meetings are of a technical character and aim to exchange ideas and views only on the Euphrates issue."

The head of the Iraqi delegation told AL-SAFIR that the Damascus meetings are within the "efforts to coordinate with the brothers in Syria on the Euphrates water. These meetings complement talks held in Baghdad in July 1995." He added: "We will propose a meeting between Foreign Ministers Faruq al-Shar' and Muhammad Sa'id al- Sahhaf in Cairo on the sidelines of the Arab League meeting as a prelude to a tripartite meeting among the foreign ministers of Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. This item is on our agenda." He said Iraq is satisfied with Syria's stance on the Euphrates issue, saying the Syrians "adhere to Iraq's share, which amounts to 58 percent of the total flow into Syrian territory in accordance with an agreement signed between the two countries in 1990."

Syria: Iraq's Proposal for Joint Groups on Water Rejected

MM1302151696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 96 p 4

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi in Damascus: "Syria Rejects Iraq's Request To Set Up Joint Groups To Cross Borders"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources have told AL-HAYAH that Syria has rejected Iraq's request to set up "joint working groups" which would cross the closed borders between the two countries, and that both the Syrian and Iraqi delegations at the Damascus talks have agreed on "total coordination" between them to "induce" Turkey to recognize the "principle of sharing" the waters of the Euphrates River between the three states bordering it.

The sources said that the Syrian and Iraqi sides yesterday held a third session of negotiations chaired by 'Abd-al-Sattar Salman Husayn, under secretary at the Iraqi Irrigation Ministry, and Barakat Hadid, assistant to the Syrian irrigation minister, and attended by Muhammad Munib al-Rifa'i and Naji Haraj Jamil, representatives of the Syrian and Iraqi Foreign Ministries respectively, and water experts Engineer Ibrahim Mukhawwal and Engineer Muhammad Hasabani (Syria) and Sa'd Jasim al-Sayyid and Walid 'Abd-al-Hamid (Iraq).

Sources close to the participants told AL-HAYAH that the two sides continued "discussing the issues raised and exchanged data on the technical aspects and the projects that both sides intend to set up on the Euphrates

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and Tigris rivers," and stressed that "they have agreed on total coordination to induce the Turks to accept the principle of sharing the Euphrates waters between Syria, Iraq, and Turkey, and to implement it instead of the 1987 interim bilateral agreement which distinguishes between the Turkish and the Arab side and allocates 500 cubic meters of water per second to each of them."

The informed sources stressed that the Syrian side "has not granted the Iraqi's delegation request to set up joint survey and observation working groups to include experts and engineers from both sides."

The Iraqi delegation chief had told AL-HAYAH that he had again appealed to Syria to agree to set up "joint working groups" which would cross the Syrian-Iraqi borders, closed since the early eighties, and that the Iraqi side had been presenting the names of the Iraqi delegation since 1993 "but, so far, we have not had a response."

Sources in the Syrian delegation explained that there was a proposal "to postpone discussing this issue in exchange for activating the Syrian-Iraqi technical committee and alternating its meetings between Damascus and Baghdad." The sources added: "We have agreed to exert pressure (on Turkey) in order to arrive at a distribution of the water. The agreement should be a trilateral agreement, and we demand that the principle of distribution be recognized. When the Turks confirm it, the other issues will be easy because the technical aspect is not unrealistic. They (the Turks) must be induced to recognize this principle."

The sources stressed that the Syrian and Iraqi delegations did not discuss the Iraqi proposal to set a minimum level for the water released by the Turks at the Syrian-Turkish border, which, according to 'Abd-al-Sattar Salman Husayn's proposal, should not be less than 250 cubic meters per second.

The Syrian sources said that Engineer 'Abd-al-Rahman Madani, the Syrian irrigation minister, will meet today with members of both delegations after the end of the fourth session of negotiations intended for preparing the minutes of the coordinating meeting of the Syrian-Iraqi committee which was set up under the 1989 agreement. Members of the Iraqi delegation are today inspecting the Syrian projects on the Euphrates.

Syria: Official Cited on Damascus Water Talks

JN1302220296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1940 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 13 Feb (INA) — Munib al-Rifa'i, chief of the Legal Affairs and Treaties Department in the Syrian Foreign Ministry, said today that the Iraqi and Syrian delegations meeting in Damascus hold similar views on sharing water with Turkey.

Al-Rifa'i, who leads the Syrian delegation, said Syrian Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Madani received members of the two delegations this morning. The Iraqi delegation is led by 'Abd- al-Sattar Salman Husayn. The Syrian minister discussed with the delegates the issue of water sharing and the need for coordination, cooperation, and a fair and acceptable agreement on water sharing among the three countries.

Al-Rifa'i said the two delegations exchanged views about Turkey's actions, including the recently constructed Birecik dam. The two delegations also discussed the actions by Arab and other countries to stop the illegal Turkish measures, which conflict with international law and the rights of riparian states on the Tigris and Euphrates.

He added that this issue will be referred to the meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo on 31 March in order to adopt a unified Arab stand that supports the rights of Syria and Iraq to the Tigris and Euphrates waters.

Iraq addressed a memorandum to the Arab League last January, saying that Turkey had continued to build dams without taking into consideration Syrian and Iraqi rights to the Euphrates waters.

Syria: Official—Syria, Iraq Agree on Water Issues

JN1402133296 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Feb 96 pp 24, 20

[Report by 'Ali Jamalu in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Syrian and Iraqi delegations to the technical meetings on the Euphrates water and on the disagreement on these waters with Turkey ended their preliminary talks in Damascus at noon yesterday.

The Iraqi delegation left for Aleppo today on an inspection tour of the projects and dams Syria has set up on the Euphrates. The delegation will return to Damascus at noon on Thursday to sign the minutes of the meetings after which it will return to Baghdad.

Syrian Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Rahman Madani received the two delegations yesterday morning. The members of the delegations explained in detail to the minister the points discussed during the meetings which began last Saturday morning.

An authoritative Syrian government source said the talks are being held in a cordial and positive atmosphere and that Minister Madani has sensed that there is agreement on the points dealing with the Euphrates water and the steps that should be taken to protect the Syrian and Iraqi

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people's rights to the Euphrates water in accordance with international law.

Munib al-Rifa'i, director of the legal department at the Syrian Foreign Ministry and head of the Syrian delegation to the talks, said that Damascus yesterday received Ankara's reply to the memorandum it had sent to it in early January on the Euphrates and that the Syrian Foreign Ministry is drafting its reply which it will send in the coming days.

Al-Rifa'i added: Our Iraqi brothers in the delegation told us that Baghdad has also received a similar reply from Ankara on the memorandum Iraq had sent to Turkey on the same topic and that Baghdad is also preparing its reply.

Al-Rifa'i was surprised at the report by a London-based Arab magazine that Iraq has proposed the formation of joint teams to cross the borders with Syria and that the Syrian side rejects this. He said that such an issue was never discussed.

Al-Rifa'i said: As members of the Iraqi-Syrian technical committee, we are responsible for the implementation of the 1990 accord, and when there is need to cross the borders, we do so. However, I do not believe there is an urgent need to do this right now.

Al-Rifa'i said: We and the Iraqi brothers are in agreement over the issue of the Euphrates water and there are no topics on which we differ or which we interpret differently. Our discussions focused on how to reach a fair water-sharing formula among the three countries.

Al-Rifa'i added: This requires a political decision as technical committees cannot do this alone. We, in Syria and our brothers in Iraq only ask for our rights and the Turkish Government should make a decision on this.

Al-Rifa'i said: We have been studying the technical aspects for more than 25 years and we now have sufficient information on this. The solution is not in Damascus or in Baghdad but in Ankara which ignores our rights.

On a possible meeting between Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al- Shar' and Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf on the margin of the Arab League Council meeting in April, al-Rifa'i said: The Iraqi brothers raised this point and we discussed it. In any case, there is the Arab League meeting and the issue of water could be discussed at this meeting or on its margin. There are no obstacles to water cooperation on the ministerial level because Syria wants to get the water from the Euphrates and the Tigris that rightfully belongs to it.

Al-Rifa'i said: We have put international and regional organizations in the picture, as well as the UN Security Council permanent members and the countries which agreed to assist Turkey in the form of loans to complete its projects on the Euphrates and the Tigris. We told all parties that this will harm our rights, and that Turkey has no right to establish projects on the Euphrates and the Tigris without first consulting Syria and Iraq as this will greatly harm both our countries.

On the content of the Turkish reply to the Syrian memorandum, al- Rifa'i said that it does not tackle the essence, and does not serve the purpose, and we are preparing a reply memorandum which we will send in the coming days.

Syria: al-Asad Supports 'Active European Role' in Peace

JN1302195996 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad received the European troika delegation, led by Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, at the People's Palace at 1400 [1200 GMT] today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the Italian, Spanish, and Irish ambassadors to Syria, attended the meeting.

Talks dealt with the peace process on the Syrian-Israeli track, its developments, expectations, and the role Europe can embark on to assist the peace process so that it will realize its objective.

The president explained the Syria's positive position on the peace process and the objective of a just and comprehensive peace, as well as Syria's support for an active European role in the peace process. Talks also dealt with cooperation between Syria and the European Union on the basis of the Barcelona conference resolutions. [passage omitted]

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South Asian Affairs

Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan To Meet in Tehran on Afghan Issue

LD1402131496 Tehran IRNA in English 1245 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 14, IRNA — Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan are to hold a tripartite meeting here next Saturday [17 Feb] to exchange views on Afghan related issues.

An informed political source told IRNA here Wednesday that acting foreign minister of Pakistan Najmuddin Shaikh and Afghan minister of state for foreign affairs Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i would preside over the session.

Terming the session as important given new developments in Afghanistan, the source said the meeting would most probably last for two days.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Government, Hekmatyar Sign Accord on Roads, Electricity

LD1302230696 Tehran IRNA in English 2039 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Feb 13 (IRNA) — One of the members of the Afghan Government Delegation to Jalalabad, Mohammad Anvar Jagdelak, announced here Tuesday that for the first time after four years, the government of Borhanoddin Rabbani has inked an accord with the Hezb-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan [Afghan Islamic Party] of Golboddin Hekmatyar on permanent reopening of the roads to Kabul and the supply of electricity to the capital city.

This accord has been signed between Jagdelak and Abdulghafur, a commander of the regional government of Seroubi and Hassan Karoufil representing the Hezb-e Eslami.

The content of the accord allows the supply of electricity from the dams which are under the control of Hezb-e Eslami. The control, maintenance and protection of electric posts will be carried out by two sides.

The accord also declared 'Bat Khak' and 'Lateh Band' as 'peace zones'.

The agreement is considered as the first step towards resolving the four year war and hostility between the central government and the Hezb-e Eslami.

Afghanistan: Islamabad Talks Said To Enhance Peace Prospects

BK1202123196 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 12 Feb 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Fresh Afghan Parleys"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The fresh rounds of talks which Islamabad has lately hosted in pursuit of a negotiated settlement of the Afghanistan crisis have brightened peace prospects for the beleaguered country. In the latest such initiative, leaders of the Supreme Coordination Council, representing combined opposition to Rabbani's rule, started parleys at Islamabad on Saturday to devise a joint strategy in the backdrop of Rabbani's offer to step down in favour of a consensus candidate for the presidency.

Hezb-e-Eslami chief Golboddin Hekmatyar has flown into Islamabad to join Rashid Dostam. Sibs Jhatilish Mujaddadi and Ustad Muhaqqiq (who represents the Hezb-e-Wahdat group led by Karim Khalli). This would be the first face-to-face meeting between Hekmatyar and Dostam since they joined hands with Mujaddadi and Khalili to oust Rabbani. The latest initiative has come in the backdrop of Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alauddin Brojourdi's recent shuttle diplomacy to develop consensus among the warring parties. Another propitious development on the Afghan scene has been the Iranian contacts with the Taleban to break the log-jam as the militia exercises all effective control over more than half the country.

The current flurry of contact has come in the backdrop of reports of an expected Taleban assault on Kabul after Ramazan.

The recent "probing" push on the capital by the student militia too is being widely preceived as a preparatory move for the post-Ramazan showdown. The Islamabad parleys bear a special significance in the context of lull in shuttle diplomacy by special UN envoy Mahmoud Mestiri. The Taleban Shoora has already rejected the UN-proposed interim council as a transitional arrangement because they perceive in it a "pro-Rabbani tilt". The Zahir Shah option too has evoked a mixed response. The complexity of the issue arises essentially from regional powers' involvement in the internecine war through their respective proxies. Not to be left behind, New Delhi too has jumped into the fray by sending in "technical advisers" for the Afghan air force.

Among other objectives, the Indian involvement is designed, to drive a wedge between Kabul and Islamabad as also to block the latter's access to the Central Asian markets. This latest peace initiative should therefore aim

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at minimising outside interference to allow the process an unhindered run. Only then can it prove truly fruitful.

Afghanistan Opposition Leaders Agree on United Stand

BK1202042296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The leaders of the Supreme Coordination Council of Afghanistan are reported to have agreed to take a united stand on resolving the Afghan crisis and ending the ongoing conflict in their country. This was stated by a spokesman of the Hezb-e Eslami-Hekmatyar group after another round of talks in Islamabad yesterday, which was attended by the leaders of the Supreme Coordination Council of Afghanistan.

Former Afghan Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, who also attended the Islamabad talks, has urged Pakistan to host a summit meeting of all Afghan leaders to resolve the Afghan crisis. In an interview after the talks he has been holding with other Afghan leaders in Islamabad, he said Pakistan, being a neighboring Islamic country, should invite all Afghan leaders, including President Borhanoddin Rabbani, to hold a sincere dialogue aimed at resolving the Afghan conflict. Golboddin Hekmatyar regretted that India and some other countries have been providing assistance to the Rabbani regime and said this interference will further complicate the situation in Afghanistan. He urged all foreign countries to refrain from meddling in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, more Afghan leaders are reported to have arrived in Islamabad to join the ongoing talks to find a permanent settlement of the Afghan crisis. They included Ehsanollah [name as transliterated], a prominent leader of the Taleban movement; and two representatives of Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami led by Mowlawi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi. Haji 'Abdol Qadeer, the governor of Nangarhar Province of Afghanistan, is reported to have arrived in Islamabad to take part in the talks.

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Suggests Joint Military Action Against Rabbani

BK1302033396 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Afghan leaders, now in Islamabad, continued their efforts and consultations last night to find a mutually acceptable settlement of the Afghan crisis. A two-member team of the Taleban militia also arrived in Islamabad yesterday to join the high-level meeting of Afghan leaders.

Meanwhile, a spokesman of Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami told the ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN yesterday that the Hezb-e Eslami chief has asked other Afghan leaders to forge a grand alliance to pressure President Rabbani to relinquish power; and if Rabbani continues to stick to power, then there is no other option but to launch a joint military action against him. The spokesman disclosed that most of the Afghan leaders agreed to Hekmatyar's proposals.

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Wants Alliance To Oust Rabbani

BK1302161596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chief of Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan, Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar, says the current Islamabad talks among the leaders of the Supreme Coordination Council and their allies are progressing constructively and a joint declaration will be forthcoming. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, he said no one should object to our coming to Islamabad as we have lived in Pakistan for years and well over 1 million Afghan refugees are still living here. Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar declared that there is no doubt that India is supporting Rabbani regime with full strength of arms and ammunition besides Russia. He called for an immediate end to their interference into the internal affairs of Afghanistan in the interest of peace and stability. He urged Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani to step down without loss of time to avoid bloodshed and facilitate a peaceful solution to the current strife in Afghanistan. He also emphasized the need for the formation of a grand opposition alliance, including the Taleban, to oust present Kabul regime if Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani does not agree to step down. Replying to a question, Mr. Hekmatyar said the Supreme Coordination Council is in direct and indirect contact with the Taleban.

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Ready To Talk to Rabbani Before Power Transfer

LD1302154896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After four days of talks among opponents of the government, Golboddin Hekmatyar [leader of Hezb-e Eslami, Islamic Party] said in Islamabad today that the High Coordination Council [HCC] is ready to hold talks with Rabbani provided he agrees to hold negotiations on setting up an interim government. Hekmatyar added: Mr. Rabbani can participate in talks before transferring power. Our correspondent in Islamabad has sent us this report.

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[Correspondent] The High Coordination Council [HCC], the coalition of opponents of the Afghan Government, has announced that President Borhanoddin Rabbani can take part in talks with the HCC on resolving the Afghan problem without first having to step down. This point was made by Golboddin Hekmatyar at a news conference in Islamabad today after four days of talks among the groups opposed to the government.

Mr. Hekmatyar said the talks could be held inside or outside Afghanistan. He added that the HCC wants power to be turned over to an interim government which should be representative of all parties. Hekmatyar said: Such a government can be formed without the participation of the Afghan parties. However, the agreement of all parties is necessary on this matter.

Concerning the conditions for the transfer of power, the Hezb-e Eslami leader said:

[Begin Hekmatyar recording] We have a number of conditions. First [words indistinct] Rabbani is to relinquish power and he is to transfer power to an interim government. Kabul is to be demilitarized and then general elections will be held in Afghanistan. And we should restore order. The present insecurity and disorder must cease. [end recording]

[Correspondent] Hekmatyar said that war is not a solution to the Afghan problem and that the HCC wants to resolve all problems through talks. Answering a question, Mr. Hekmatyar said: The Taleban should be involved in the current talks because this is their last chance; it is possible that they may not have such an opportunity again. The Hezb-e Eslami leader added: The current talks in Islamabad were very fruitful. An official announcement will be made in this respect in a few days' time.

Afghanistan: Opposition Talks in Islamabad End Without Result

LD1402110796 Tehran IRNA in English 1029 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb. 14, IRNA — After four days of marathon discussions in Islamabad, the top Afghan opposition leaders did not emerge with any consensus to forge a grand alliance against the Kabul regime, led by President Borhanoddin Rabbani, viewed some political analysts here.

The component parties leaders of the Supreme Coordination Council of the Islamic Revolution in Afghanistan (SCCIRA) including Golboddin Hekmatyar of Hezb-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam of National Islamic Movement Front, Sebghatollah Muoaddedi of National Liberation Front, representatives of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan [Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan] held four day-long detailed deliberations to evolve a joint strategy against the Rabbani government.

A two-member delegation of the Islamic students of Taleban also Monday had joined the discussions. The Taleban is against entering into any joint force to wage final assault against President Rabbani.

Hekmatyar, the chief of Hezb-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan, had put forward proposals that all Afghan groups should form a grand coalition to pressurize Rabbani to step down and or take a joint military action against him.

The Afghan analysts view that the Taleban's rigid stand has forced the other Afghan leaders to review their policy.

This is why the Afghan leader Hekmatyar Tuesday evening in a press conference in Islamabad announced that the Afghan opposition coalition was ready to hold talks with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani over the issue of transfer of power without requiring him to resign first.

This shows the deviation from their earlier stand. Hekmatyar said that the Taleban could not remove the Kabul regime alone and they can't fight against Kabul on their own.

Hekmatyar had said the Supreme Coordination Council wanted to avert war and was ready to talk even with Rabbani regime within or out of Afghanistan provided he was sincere in resolving the crisis through peaceful means.

The Kabul government Monday severely criticized the holding of high-level talks between Afghan opposition leaders in Pakistan, saying they should have taken place inside Afghanistan. Kabul had viewed that the talks will not have any result and were likely to be fruitless.

Though various Afghan leaders who met in Islamabad agreed to form a grand opposition alliance, they did not agree on the composition of the future interim set up in Afghanistan, if Rabbani is forced to step down.

Afghanistan: President Calls For All-Party Peace Talks

LD1302220996 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan presidential spokesman said: While we consider (?fruitful) the talks between the concerned parties, we believe that any talks or negotiations should aim for the restoration of peace and the cessation of war and [words indistinct].

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Answering a question about the meeting of the High Coordination Council [opposition grouping] leaders in Islamabad, 'Abdol Aziz Morad, presidential spokesman, told BAKHTAR todayh [13 February] that the Islamic state of Afghanistan was of the opinion that talks and polemics [words indistinct] the state had many times announced that war was not a way of resolving problems and that talks should be held.

The spokesman said: The president truly and sincerely called on all groups and forces to come to the country's capital to exchange views and discuss a permanent cessation of war and the restoration of peace. [Words indistinct] if the leaders of the opposing groups cannot come to the capital for some reason, the president is ready to go to their centers personally.

[Words indistinct] I once again assert that the Islamic state of Afghanistan is seriously dismayed by the Pakistani Embassy incident. [Words indistinct] the government is ready to repair the Pakistani Embassy and, following its humanitarian policy, the government is ready to give all necessary and possible assistance to the victims.

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Accuses India of Interference

BK1102161096 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Several Afghan leaders continued their bilateral and multilateral talks in Islamabad today to iron out a solution for creating peace and establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan. A meeting was held today between the chief of Jonbesh-e Milli, General Rashid Dostam, and the head of Hezb-e Eslami, Golboddin Hekmatyar. The meeting was also attended by the deputy of Hezb-e Wahdat, Ostad Muhaqqiqi, former president of Afghanistan, Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, and Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gilani of National Islamic Movement. These leaders mainly discussed different proposals, which they had earlier advanced to the UN secretary general's envoy, Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri. During the meeting it was felt that to avoid further bloodshed, the only way out was a representative government for Afghanistan after the departure of Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani.

The former prime minister of Afghanistan, Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar, has sought a more active role from Pakistan for creating peace and establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan. Goboddin Hekmatyar became prime minister of Afghanistan for one year under the Islamabad accord and after the expiry of his tenure he stepped down, whereas Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, who was made president of Afghanistan for one year, is still holding power but in a very reduced territory. Golboddin Hekmatyar spoke to Pakistan Television correspondent Azhar Masood on various dimensions of the factional fighting in Afghanistan:

[Begin recording] [Hekmatyar] Pakistan, more than other countries. [sentence as heard] We like Pakistan to play such a role. I think if Pakistan Government invites all leaders, including Rabbani, and ask him that we want peace in this region and there were plans, and all leaders can come once again here in Islamabad and sit together and through negotiations, sincere negotiations, find a solution. I think Pakistan can play such a role.

[Masood] Rabbani Saheb has made friends with India, how do you see it?

[Hekmatyar] That is the problem. Unfortunately, Rabbani is now friend of India and they are supporting Rabbani, and there are other countries also supporting Rabbani. We feel that by such interferences in internal affairs of Afghanistan, the problem will be more complicated. Our neighbors should help us in stopping these interferences in internal affairs of Pakistan and leave Afghan nation to decide future, determine their future. Unfortunately, the fighting is still going on. Kabul regime is insisting on fighting, and they believe that by the support of their foreign supporters through fighting they can remain in power; but they are very weak, they have no morale and people are fed up with them and the whole nation is asking for change, fighting to be ended and peace return to Afghanistan under an interim arrangement and then elections, people to be allowed to make their future and have their elected government. [end recording]

Golboddin Hekmatyar has influence in the provinces of Laghman, Sarowbi, Knodoz, Ghowr and Nangharhar, where he holds a major chunk of power in a coalition with Yunes Khalis.

Afghanistan: Army Responds to Taleban Rockets With Shelling

LD1302204796 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Government artillery units responded to Taleban rocket attacks last night. BAKHTAR reported that the hireling Taleban forces residential areas of Kabul and Islamic Army positions last night with rockets. In response, Army artillery units pounded their positions to the south of Kabul. No information has been received about fatalities or casualties among the Taleban. The Taleban fired 22 rockets into residential areas of Kabul as a result of which one Kabul resident was martyred and seven others were injured. A house was also partially damaged.

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Afghanistan: Taleban Said To Repulse Army Offensive

LD1302222196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Feb

[FBIS Translated Text] The day before yesterday [11 February] the Taleban repulsed a Shura-e Nezar offensive in Chakari and the Khurd- Kabul area. Reports reaching Radio Message of Freedom say that the day before yesterday the government forces launched an unsuccessful attack on Taleban positions and bases. They faced stiff resistance from the Taleban and, as a result, the government forces suffered a heavy defeat after several hours fighting.

The report says that the Ghazgay area has been captured by the Taleban forces. The Taleban also captured one set of BM12 [rocket launcher], one motor vehicle, and a quantity of light and heavy weapons. Ten Kabul administration gunmen were taken prisoner. It should be noted that the Kabul administration has not commented on this incident yet.

According to another report the heavy weapons exchange between the Kabul administration and the Taleban occurred the day before yesterday. The report says that heavy loss of life was suffered by both sides along their front lines. Local people around the front lines have also suffered heavy property damage.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Troops Secure 'Strategic Points' in Dhaka

BK1402044796 Hong Kong AFP in English 0432 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Feb 14 (AFP) — Troops moved to secure strategic points in the Bangladeshi capital Wednesday, as a 48-hour general strike paralysed most of the country ahead of a general election boycotted by the opposition, witnesses said.

Troops in camouflage uniform armed with machine guns took up positions behind sandbags on rooftops overnight around polling centres for Thursday's parliamentary voting and at other sensitive points.

In renewed violence overnight, several home-made bombs were lobbed inside the high walled presidential Bangabhaban palace in downtown Dhaka, press reports said.

The state-run Radio Bangladesh building in the north of the capital was also targeted, the daily Ittefaq and other newspapers reported, adding there was no damage and no-one was hurt.

Similar loud explosions were heard from other areas late Tuesday.

Opposition parties have vowed to disrupt the vote unless scrapped at the last minute by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

The army was called on by the election commission two months ago to help the civil authorities recover unauthorised arms and ensure peaceful conduct of the polls.

The visible presence of troops in the capital and other key towns suggested the authorities were anticipating trouble at the start of the general strike, witnesses said.

Dhaka and major Bangladeshi towns were paralysed Wednesday morning with vehicles staying off the streets, and shops and business offices shut.

Thousands of police and paramilitary troops were on fixed posts in downtown and other districts or on patrol in virtually empty streets, witnesses and residents said, although there was no immediate report of fresh violence.

The stoppage was called by opposition parties, led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed of the Awami League, as part of their two-year old street campaign to dislodge Zia's government.

They want the February 15 parliamentary elections scrapped and fresh balloting held under a caretaker neutral administration.

Bangladesh: Preparations on Eve of Elections Detailed

BK1402043796 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0200 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chief election commissioner, Justice A.K.M. Sadeque, is addressing the nation at 1830 [1230 GMT] this evening on the eve of the sixth parliamentary election. The speech of the chief election commissioner will simultaneously be broadcast over Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television.

Meanwhile, the nation is set for polling tomorrow. A 48-hour ban is now in effect on all kinds of public meetings, processions, and rallies from midnight last night for holding the election in a free, fair, and impartial manner. No one will be allowed to do any subversive activity, terrorizing and intimidation of the voters, or persons engaged in electioneering activities and use of arms or muscle power will not be allowed during the period. The violators of this order will be given maximum seven years and minimum two years rigorous imprisonment with fine.

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According to the Election Commission, 1,450 candidates are contesting for 252 parliament seats in the general election; 993 of them are nominees of 41 political parties and alliances and remaining 457 independent candidates. Earlier, 48 candidates from 48 constituencies were officially elected without contest as they were lone candidates. The number of voters in the constituencies are 47,424,836. Of them, 23,974,251 are men and 23,450,575 are women; 21,106 polling stations and 98,710 polling booths have been (?set) to conduct the polls throughout the country.

The Election Commission has appointed 66 returning officers in 64 districts, 506 assistant returning officers, and 317,226 polling officers to conduct the polls. Voting will begin at 0800 in the morning and will end at 1600 in the afternoon without any break. Voters who have not been provided with the voters identity cards will be able to cast their votes provided their names are listed as voters in their respective areas. The voters who have already been provided with ID card have, however, been advised to cast their votes by showing the ID card.

The Election Commission has made some changes in the announcement by radio and television of results of tomorrow's parliament election in view of the Holy Ramadan, Juma'tul Wida, and Lailatul Qadr [last Friday of Ramadan and 27th night of Ramadan]. Accordingly, only completed results will be broadcast by radio and television and there will not progressive results. The first bulletin with election results will be put on air at 2330 at night on the election day and will continue till 1230 on the following day. After a few hours of break for Juma' [Friday] prayers, Bangladesh Radio and Bangladesh Television will again start broadcasting election results from 1430 and will continue till 1800. After that, radio and television will broadcast remaining results in their normal bulletins.

Bangladesh: Zia—Steps To Be Taken To Protect Rights

BK1402002496 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said that the government will take legal measures to safeguard fundamental rights and protect the life and property of the people if violence and illegal activities of some opposition parties continue. She was exchanging views with members of the Bangladesh Overseas Correspondents Association and foreign journalists who arrived in Dhaka to cover general elections scheduled for 15 February. During the talks, she said that the holding of elections has become obligatory for the continuity of the constitutional and democratic process in the country. Khaleda Zia said the Constitution will be violated if it is not possible to hold elections by 21 February, and added that once the Constitution is violated the whole democratic process will be at stake.

In reply to a question, the prime minister said that efforts to hold talks and reach a consensus will continue to resolve political tension. Replying to another question, the prime minister said that the ruling party has provided many concessions, but the opposition parties did not give positive cooperation for formulating realistic steps for resolving the political impasse. The prime minister further said that there is no such thing as the last word in politics, and added that it may be possible to arrive at a consensus within a few days, although this has not been possible in 22 months of talks.

Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman and Information and Commerce Minister M. Shamsul Islam were also present on the occasion.

India

India: Article Faults U.S. Stand on PRC Nuclear Aid to Pakistan

BK1402101796 Delhi NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 12 Feb 96 p 6

[Article by Ranjit Kumar: "What Sort of Evidence Does the United States Still Need?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The disclosure by the U.S. spy agency, the CIA, about Pakistan clandestinely receiving 6,000 magnetic rings from China for its nuclear program should clarify why India is unable to share U.S. concerns over the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. It is the moral and legal obligation of all signatories to the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] not to assist any country's nuclear program, either through the sale of accessories, equipment, etc. China, since it signed the nuclear NPT two years ago, should have refrained from giving any nuclear material clandestinely or openly to Pakistan that might speed up its nuclear program.

If a signatory nuclear power indulges in such an irresponsible action, it most certainly weakens the entire NPT by exposing its irrelevance and ineffectiveness, which then deters other countries from signing the treaty. After all, who can rely upon a treaty, the signatories of which merrily flout its rules and trade in nuclear material and accessories with a third party? In such a situation, how can India be expected to join the treaty and forego its nuclear option forever? Its own protagonists are secretly helping its adversary to achieve a nuclear capability despite all the restrictions.

What is interesting in this context is the fact that the U.S. spokesperson only expressed casual worry when

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his attention was drawn to this news report, and he added that his administration had not yet ascertained the veracity of the news that China had given magnet rings to Pakistan. If the United States accepts this news to be true, however, it will not only be required to impose sanctions against China, which sold the prohibitive items to Pakistan, but it would also have to take strong action against Pakistan. Let alone taking any strong action or imposing restrictions against Pakistan, the U.S. President only last week cast his seal of approval on the implementation of the Brown modification proposal, which means Pakistan will now receive deadly U.S. naval weapons worth millions without any hitch.

Interestingly, the self-same United States, which now chooses not to rely on information supplied by its own spy network concerning China's sale of magnet rings to Pakistan, did not even care to confirm rumors two months ago about India's conducting a nuclear test in Pokaran. This alleged information was also based on an incredible report by the CIA. The U.S. Administration readily believed it to be true, however, and raised considerable hue and cry and went as far as to threaten India with dire restrictions if it conducted the nuclear test. Why these double standards when the source of the two "disclosures" was exactly the same—its own spy agency, the CIA? Why the U.S. Administration has chosen to ignore this latest revelation is incomprehensible.

This dubious U.S. stand seems to suggest that its nuclear worries arise out of the activities of some special countries and that its nuclear policy is not uniform. Had the U.S. Administration expressed the same worries about Pakistan's clandestine action as it did regarding India's "imaginary" action, the Indian public would have detected a streak of honesty in U.S. nuclear worries and would have forced its government to join the nuclear nonproliferation drive launched by the United States.

As a matter of fact, India was the cosponsor with the United States at the 1993 and 1994 international talks on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is currently being discussed at the deliberations in Geneva. India, however, has refused to side with the United States any longer at the ongoing conference in Geneva, after it found the United States giving no consideration to this support and unconcernedly willing to release a fresh consignment of weapons to Pakistan, thereby escalating the arms race in South Asia. In fact, U.S. selectivity in enforcing its nuclear nonproliferation drive has raised many serious doubts in the minds of the Indian people regarding its intentions.

Not only is the United States trying to have both the nuclear treaties—the NPT and the CTBT—imposed upon the world in a most discriminatory and arbitrary manner, it is also trying to control the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in a similarly despotic fashion. Who should be booked for MTCR violations and who should not seems to be dependent exclusively on selfish U.S. considerations. Not only was China a signatory to the NPT, it also gave its word with regard to upholding the MTCR. After its promise, it should not have given the M-11 missiles to Pakistan in the first place. Undaunted, however, it continued to supply these missiles to Pakistan. When the matter was brought to the attention of the United States, it tried to wriggle out by saying that its sources had thus far failed to confirm whether China gave the complete missile to Pakistan or only a few spare parts!

Notwithstanding the U.S. refusal or doubt about Pakistan's receiving the Chinese M-11, what could be greater proof or confirmation than Pakistani President Leghari himself announcing very proudly during his visit to China last year that his country had received these missiles? Meanwhile, the Chinese spokesperson has officially admitted China sold these missiles to Pakistan but came up with the explanation that this missile transfer to Pakistan did not violate the MTCR, which prevents the transfer of missiles with a range of 300 km. Since the M-11's range is only 297 km, it did not violate the MTCR. The U.S. Administration readily accepted China's explanation. Pakistan has every right to buy missiles from China, but why is India being prevented from deploying its indigenously developed missile?

India: Article Views Change in U.S. Stance Prior to Elections

BK1402092696 Delhi HINDUSTAN in Hindi 11 Feb 96 p 7

[Article by Alok Mehta: "America's Changing Stances Before the Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After the U.S. Administration officially earmarked about $10 million in its budget to devastate Iran, the prediction by the U.S. spy agency, the CIA, that the fragmentation of India is not a remote possibility emerges as a serious challenge to all of Asia. Using these pressure and terror tactics, will the United States ever be able to improve its relations with India? Indian diplomats and defense experts have expressed their surprise at this strange U.S. attitude. Not only this, the vacillating reaction of the United States at Pakistan's receiving Chinese equipment for use in making the nuclear bomb is also raising serious doubts at even the possibility of any improvement in Indian-U.S. relations.

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U.S. Defense Secretary Perry admitted just three days ago while speaking at an institute in Washington that "China's massive military preparations worry me. It may not emerge as a threat to us yet, but I am seriously concerned about it. We will have to monitor the situation very carefully. China's enhancing of its military capability is sure to pose a threat to Taiwan and other neighboring countries, and we have to be specially guarded for this reason." Expressing his concern over China's augmenting its military might, the U.S. leader seems to conveniently forget that India and Pakistan are both China's close neighbors, and India has already fought major wars against each of them. The aggressor each time was not India but one of these two countries.

As such, China's growing military might hardly cause worry for the distant United States, but both Pakistan's and China's connivance in nuclear matters and Pakistan's amassing of weapons through both fair and foul means really poses a grave danger for India because these weapons are surely India-specific. They will not be used against any other country but India. According to the latest news, Pakistan is striving to establish a close nexus with Afghanistan and Iran on a religious basis. Under such a situation, how can the United States ever justify giving support publicly to the terrorist activities sponsored by Pakistan? How can the United States view this as proper?

What is more surprising is the distinct change in the attitude of U.S. leaders just prior to the upcoming elections in India and the United States. U.S. leaders missed no opportunity to attempt to improve both political and economic relations with India during the last four years. With the change in India's economic p[illegible]cies in 1992, the number of bilateral agreements enter[illegible]d into between the United States and India established a record. That number of agreements had not been signed over the past four decades.

During this period, Mrs. Clinton and five senior U.S. secretaries also visited India, and these leaders, along with Ambassador Wisner, tried to impress upon the Indian people at every level that they greatly honored India's solidarity, integrity, and democratic system. They seemed to launch an indirect campaign to eliminate the old rancor between India and the United States. The temporary sanctions against Pakistan under the Pressler Amendment were very much a part of this campaign. All of a sudden, however, following the Brown Amendment, the impediment to Pakistan receiving U.S. weapons was removed!

Why was this done? To shackle India again? There is no doubt that, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, India began to emerge as a major regional superpower. With the fast economic changes that are coming in India, the day is also not far off when India will become an economic superpower even larger or on par with China or any European country. What is important in India's advance is that it achieve all this without compromising its commitment to the principles of coexistence and peace. It has never given any indication to the contrary.

This spirit of coexistence is quite manifest in India's taking the initiative to improve its political and economic relations with Asian as well as with African and Latin American countries. India believes in maintaining friendly relations with every country through peaceful cooperation and not by enforcing coercive methods or using hooliganism. India is not prepared, however, to succumb to any pressure either. Its position of not signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is also based upon its policy formulated on the principles of peace and equality.

As far as the nuclear treaties are concerned, India has emphasized constantly since 1954 that the use of nuclear energy should not remain confined to the control of a chosen few countries. How can India allow the United States and its allies and proteges to continue arming themselves to the teeth with nuclear weapons while it helplessly watches the nuclear dangers looming large on its horizons? India's emphasis is the same in the economic field. It wants to maintain good economic relations with all at an equal level. The U.S. Administration admitted some years ago that it would bode well for the U.S. economy if it could ignore the delicate political differences of opinion on certain issues and attempt to establish good relations with India. It felt that India's democratic set up paved an affluent way to its market.

India, for its part, provided many concessions and facilities to multinational U.S. companies to help them work and spread their activities in India. Forgetting the old hostility between the two countries for the last two decades, India did not flinch in providing maximum cooperation toward mutual ties in the defense, culture, technology, and education sectors. Both countries have already entered into long-term agreements in the telecommunications, transportation, and power generation fields. Despite all these developments, it appears that India's economic progress and the claim for permanent membership on the Security Council are the two possible causes of U.S. heartburn. Notwithstanding the distinctly hostile U.S. attitude on these matters, India has still remained calm. Bidding adieu after his stay in Washington, Indian Ambassador Siddharth Shankar Ray made no harsh comments on the actions of the Clinton administration. A proposal has already been cleared by the Government of India for the appointment of Mr.

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Naresh Chandra, one of India's most level-headed and experienced administrators, to replace him.

The Government of India deemed it necessary to have a full-fledged Indian Ambassador in Washington when the U.S. presidential elections are held. India's stance of extreme caution and patience in its dealing with the United States is reflected in both Prime Minister Rao's and External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee's extremely guarded statements after a considerable amount of time.

Despite India's encouraging response to U.S. overtures, some U.S. leaders and officials are still striving to destabilize Indian politics, especially prior to the general elections. Nevertheless, after resuming the regular supply of weapons to Pakistan and questioning Kashmir's merger with India, the average Indian is doubtful over the U.S. attitude. Indian political parties would be hard pressed during the coming elections to assure the Indian people that they would not cower before U.S. threats at any cost. This situation may indirectly weave a veil of suspicion between India and the United States and may perhaps force the new Indian Government to review its relationship with the United States.

India: Editorial—Clinton in 'Tight Spot' on Nonproliferation

BK1402091696 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 13 Feb 96 p 8

[Editorial: "Will U.S. Wriggle Out?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PRESIDENT Clinton is not about to thank Pakistan for putting him in a tight spot on non-proliferation. The question is what specific action is he contemplating following the latest Chinese transfers of nuclear equipment to Pakistan's suspected weapons facility, the Abdul Kader Khan Research Laboratory at Kahuta. With the interest the US media is showing in this issue, it will not be easy for Mr Clinton to wriggle out of his responsibilities this time.

He may still get away with pretending, as he did with the sale of M-11 missiles to Pakistan, that the evidence is not adequate. He may still be able to persuade some Americans that the national interest is served by turning a blind eye to contravention of domestic law and international treaty. In that event, it will be up to tough interlocutors such as Senators Glenn and Pressler or the presidential hopefuls to prove him wrong. Each time Washington ducks action and reposes faith in the protestations of innocence from the accused, it exposes its loudly proclaimed mission of policing nuclear proliferation to the ridicule of its allies and the contempt of rising powers like China.

It is more than obvious from China's sale of nuclear-related ring magnets to Pakistan at this time that both countries have the measure of the man in the White House. What is holding Mr Clinton back from taking action? Clearly China more than Pakistan. As a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, China knows that any violation will trigger US trade sanctions against it under the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act of 1994. But having succeeded in breaking the human rights-trade linkages, Beijing has evidently been tempted to test the limits on non-proliferation. It could be right in calculating that Mr Clinton will bend over backwards not to alienate the American business lobby in an election year.

Islamabad, on its part, felt it ran no risk of losing its hard- won $386 million arms package because it would have made a similar assessment and believes Washington will not be able to act selectively against Pakistan. In short, neither country takes America at its word. While the US leaders digest the meaning of this, it might do some good to remind them of certain other facts. The record shows India has been a scrupulous non-proliferation, neither exporting weapons technology nor making clandestine purchases. This country should not be bracketed with "rogue states". It should be heard with greater respect.

India: Border Force Kills 3 'Pakistan-Trained Militants'

BK1402070296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the BSF [Border Security Force] foiled a major infiltration bid by the Pakistan-trained militants from across the border in Ranbirsinghpura sector last night. Three militants were killed while others managed to escape back into Pakistan territory.

In another incident in Ranbirsinghpura sector, a Pakistani national was arrested by the BSF.

India: Mojahedin Kills 11 Soldiers in Kashmir in Retaliatory Strike

BK1302143996 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, 11 Indian soldiers and their agents were reported killed in stepped up retaliatory strikes by mojahedin. Six of them were killed in a landmine explosion in Anantnag, Islamabad. According to KMS [Kashmir Media Service], Indian forces besieged vast areas in Sopor and subjected the people to severe torture. The siege followed clashes between mojahedin and Indian troops. Indian troops

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gunned down seven more people during repressive operations in Pampur, Hindwara, Kupwara, and Patan areas.

Meanwhile, the Jamiatul Mojahedin has warned the four renegade Kashmiris who made the offer of bilateral talks to India to return to the fold by the 20th of this month, otherwise they should be ready for punishment. One of the defectors, Bilal Lodhi, of the People's Conference has been expelled from the party.

Iran

Iran: U.S. Said To Plan Military Action Against Iran, Iraq

LD1302193296 Tehran IRNA in English 1852 GMT 13 fEB 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Athens, Feb 13 (IRNA) — The recent announcement by the Amercian Defense Secretary William Perry to increase U.S. military presence in the Middle East was aimed against the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq, Egyptian Islamic Paper AL-SHA'B Tuesday reported. "Washington aims behind that to launch military action against Iran and Iraq," commented the bi-weekly newspaper in its main front-page report.

The sudden U.S. plan calls for the allotment of Arabic forces to join the American military action in the region, including troops from Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. Washington has demanded that 1,300 officers and soldiers from one "big Arab country" and 1,100 officers and soldiers from Syria and an unspecified number from Saudi Arabia to be attached to the American military presence.

"The big Arab country" is a clear reference to Egypt which contributed thousands of troops to the U.S.-led alliance against Iraq.

Washington is currently holding consultations with some regional countries to explain the aim of this new plot. The U.S. is also trying to involve Israel and Jordan in the military cooperation in the area, noted AL-SHA'B.

During a visit to the U.S. Central Command Headquarters at Macdill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fa. on Friday, Perry said the U.S. wants to build its presence in the Middle East. He called Iran and Iraq "the biggest threats to stability in the Middle East."

The American policy in the Middle East has three main goals, to secure the cheap flow of oil, protect the illegal Zionist entity and to hinder the unity of the Muslim states in the region.

Iran: EU Desire for Bigger Role in Peace Process Perceived

NC1402080396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 14 Feb 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The European Union has started fresh efforts to participate in the Middle East compromise process. Yesterday a high-ranking delegation from the European Union headed by the Italian foreign minister arrived in Damascus. The delegation reportedly intends to study ways to remove the obstacles to peace between the Zionist regime and Syria.

The members of the European Union troika will hold similar talks with the Zionist prime minister in Tel Aviv today. Finally, the European delegation will go to the Gaza Strip to meet Yasir 'Arafat, head of Palestinian self-rule.

The European governments, which, until recently, had no noteworthy role in the Middle East compromise process under the influence of America, the Zionist regime, and Arab governments, have now seriously decided to play as big a part as possible in this field and not to hand over the arena to the Americans. Because of its proximity to the Middle East, Europe is as interested as America in ending the conflicts between the Arabs and Israelis, because, in addition to economic and political motives, it also has security considerations in mind.

The absence of tranquility and stability in the Middle East has an impact on European security, especially security in the Mediterranean. Although the Europeans are unhappy with America's efforts to gain the initiative in action and monopolize its influence in the Middle East, they apparently agree with the Americans, at least on one thing: the domination of the Zionist regime over the regional Arab countries.

Possibly the joint U.S.-European concern over the steadfastness of the slogan on the liberation of Palestine and the culmination of the regional Muslim countries' support for this slogan explains their tacit agreement on the American peace plan for the Middle East. But many European experts and diplomats admit that this plan will not remove the crisis between the Arabs and the Zionist regime. If successful, it will only briefly hide the cinders of the existing quarrel under the ashes. They also believe that the proposed peace plan, especially on the part of occupied Palestine and the form envisaged for Palestine, faces the opposition of the Palestinian nation. There are

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so many contradictions they make even a measure of success impossible.

The Europeans appear to prefer not to stay out of the scene and to play a more effective role in the compromise process. The Americans too appear not to be unwilling to place part of the responsibility for the current problems and the possible defeat of their compromise plan on the shoulders of their European rivals. In this way they are also trying to portray the compromise deal as a universally accepted plan.

Iran: Daily—Rushdie Fatwa Should Not Hinder Closer EU Ties

LD1402075496 Tehran IRNA in English 0728 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 14, IRNA — The English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' Wednesday urged the European Union (EU) not to allow the fatwa on Salman Rushdie to hinder the formation of closer ties with Iran. The editorial said that certain pressure groups in the continent have been trying to disturb Iran-Europe relations by politicizing the Salman Rushdie issue, sparing no efforts to exert pressure on Tehran.

Turning to the recent EU statement announcing that the organization would continue to pursue dialog with Tehran to resolve the matter, the paper welcomed the talks, saying, "The EU should be given a pat in the back for not submitting to pressures from circles determined to disturb Iran-Europe relations."

The editorial reiterated that the fatwa issued by the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeyni, on February 14, 1989, against Salman Rushdie for blaspheming Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is an Islamic ruling that is unrevokable and no one is qualified to alter it. It further cautioned the EU to avoid politicizing the issue as this would make the case more complicated. It stressed that Iranian officials have pointed out that Tehran does not intend to send any commando to kill the apostate author.

Emphasizing Iran's respect for international law, it stated, "The EU should, therefore, try to mend fences in order to pave the way for more intimate ties with Iran."

Iran: Radio on Tehran's 'Interference' in Bahrain, Region

NC1402075696 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1500 GMT 14 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Summary] [passage indistinct] Because of its aggressive and instigatory nature, the Islamic Republic always interferes in the domestic affairs of other countries of the world, especially those of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. From the very outset of its coming to power, this regime has shown what its objectives are and what methods it uses to achieve these objectives. Therefore, it is not surprising if it [words indistinct] interferes in the domestic affairs of one country or another, especially those of neighboring countries.

According to news agencies, some days ago the Bahraini Ministry of the Interior wrote a strongly worded note to protest the Islamic Republic's interference in its domestic affairs. Bahrain recently expelled one of the Iranian Embassy's diplomats as a persona non grata. The diplomat, 'Abdol Rasul (Dokuhi), was the third secretary of the Iranian Embassy. [passage indistinct]

Iran: Tehran Radio Cites Paper on Marches in Bahrain

NC1402081196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An Arabic newspaper reported that tens of thousands of Bahrainis organized an extensive march on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him.

Reporting on this, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI wrote that the Bahraini Government had asked the people in charge of the marches not to use political slogans. However, the marchers chanted slogans such as "preserve us from humiliation," which have a political connotation.

The newspaper reported that the presence of the Bahraini women in the march was spectacular.

Iran: Kurd Leader—Iraq Needs Islamic Revolution

LD1402093296 Tehran IRNA in English 0812 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 14, IRNA — Iraqi Kurdistan needs a popular Islamic revolution, said Kurdish revolutionary Hizballah leader Sheikh Adham Barezani.

Barezani in an interview with the English-language daily 'Iran News' on Wednesday added that grounds for such a revolution have been paved in northern Iraq.

"I dare say that we, the Kurdish nation, are indebted to Iran for its continued assistance and support," he pointed out.

Barezani added that since the Iraqi Kurds love the Islamic revolution, Iran can always play a pivotal role in that region.

"The effect of Islamic revolution among the Kurdish nation is so positive that despite all the pressures

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applied by Western powers in Iraqi Kurdistan to stop the revolution from reaching Kurdistan, they have never succeeded in doing so," the Kurdish Hizballah leader stressed.

Commenting on the U.S. role in the region, Adham Barezani who is here along with a number of Iraqi Kurdish leaders to attend the 17th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution, said, "Iran's mediation between the contending Kurdish groups was more effective than that of the U.S. which began its peace mediation in Dublin in September 1995 and continued its sessions in northern Iraq."

But the fact is that the U.S. does not wish to solve the problems of the Kurds and by commanding a combination of Western servicemen in Turkey, Washington is in fact seeking its own interests and its presence in the Persian Gulf region, Barezaani concluded.

Iran: Majles Approves 'Urgent' Bill To Execute Spies

LD1402115696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Islamic Majles held an open session today. [passage omitted] During this session an urgent members' bill was submitted to the Majles that proposes addition of a clause to Article Moharebeh [waging war against God] of the Islamic Penal Law, which was first passed in the year 1370 [21 March 1991 to 20 March 1992]. The Majles approved the urgency of this bill.

On the basis of this bill, those condemned of spying in the interest of the enemies of the Islamic revolution and against the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be treated as moharebs [those waging war against God] and will be punished in accordance with the law [which calls for execution of a mohareb]. [passage omitted]

Iran: Candidates Not To Use Offical Media for Campaign

LD1302214696 Tehran IRNA in English 1826 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 13 (IRNA) — Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance (ERSHAD) Mostafa Mirsalim said here today that as soon as the names of candidates for the Majles are announced by the government they could not engage in elections campaign using the resources of establishments that were funded by the government.

He said because the newspapers KEYHAN, ETTELA'AT, HAMSHAHRI and IRAN belonged to government organs they could not print anything that might be construed as campaign for elections.

Mirsalim said the ban was based on the laws of the state, and that if anyone suspected the purport of the law in that respect he could ask the Majles to offer their interpretation. The ERSHAD minister said if the Majles should offer a contrary interpretation of those laws he would comply accordingly.

Iran: Election Group Uses 'Servants of Iran's Construction' Title

LD1302212596 Tehran IRNA in Persian 2001 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, 13 Feb (IRNA) — The Guardian Council's Central Bureau for Supervision Over Elections has agreed to the use of the title "Servants of Iran's Construction" for election campaigning.

One of the "Servants of Iran's Construction" members, announcing the above news, said: Following the surfacing of some doubts and uncertainties regarding the titles used by the "Servants of Iran's Construction," and in view of the fact that we would like to carry out our election campaign within the framework of laws and regulations, we decided to refer the issue to the esteemed Guardian Council's Central Bureau for Supervision Over Elections and act on the basis of its decision, considering the council's binding and determining role. We chose this course instead of responding to the irrational political maneuvers of certain political factions.

The member added: After a series of discussions, his eminence Ayatollah [Gholam Reza] Rezvani, the head of the Central Bureau for Supervision Over Elections, responding to a collective request from some members of the "Servants of Iran's Construction," announced that the participation of the group in Majles elections under the name and title of "A Group of the Servants of Iran's Construction" [jam'i az kargozaran-e sazandegi-e iran] is lawful and permitted. This instruction has been conveyed to the interior ministry in writing.

The member added: From now on, we will participate in the Fifth Majles Elections under the title of "A Group of the Servants of Iran's Construction," With the slogans of Islamic honor and the continuation of Iran's construction and development. We will, furthermore, publish the list of our candidates at the time set by the appropriate election laws.

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Iran: Cleric Encourages Participation in Elections

LD1302220596 Tehran IRNA in English 1839 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 13 (IRNA) — In an open letter to the public Tuesday [13 February], Hojjat ol-Eslam Reyshahri encouraged a strong public participation in the forthcoming elections for the Majles.

In his communique he said that he and public officials in Iran maintained that the presence in the Majles of deputies with different outlooks and preferences would help create a healthy encounter of ideas which promote ideological convictions.

He said he and others in the government maintained that the present juncture could be successfully left behind within the framework of the ideological principles propounded by Imam Khomeyni and free from very personal interpretations of those guidelines.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Reyshahri reminded that the nation now needs long-term large-scale expert planning and should abandon policymaking for only a day-to-day survival.

He said some people were trying to promote counter-revolution ideas in the form of liberalism, cultural toleration, and material welfare and international coexistence at the cost of compromise with the devouring powers which, he said, had to be fought back.

The hojjat ol-Eslam said the personalities who were promoting those ideas only intended to metamorphose the revolution and make the Iranian nation dependent on foreign powers.

Reyshahri said in his Tuesday communique that he would issue additional open letters to the people in the same relation on future occasions.

Iran: Many Pledge To Take Part in Qods Day Rallies

LD1302223996 Tehran IRNA in English 1757 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 13 (IRNA) — People from various walks of life, organizations, and institutions have announced their readiness to take part at rallies, marking the World Qods Day, on Friday [16 February].

The ideological-political department at the Islamic Republic of Iran Armed Forces in a statement, issued here Tuesday, announced its readiness to have an all-out presence in the said rallies to show their allegiance to the ideals of Qods Day as promulgated by the founder and leader of Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khomeyni.

The Islamic Revolution's Mostazafan and Janbazan Foundation (MJF) also in a separate statement voiced its readiness to take part at the rallies to support the aspirations of the Muslim Palestinian nation by renewing its allegiance with the aspirations of the late Imam Khomeyni and by following the valuable guidelines of the leader of Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, on continued struggle against the occupying Zionist regime.

MJF had in the statement, expressing solidarity and sympathy with champions of struggle against the occupier Zionism and the global arrogance, called on the world freedom lovers to support the struggles of the oppressed Palestinian people by taking part in the rallies.

The Islamic Association of College Students as well as professors of medical schools voiced their readiness to attend the rallies, calling on all justice-seeking people of the world to turn out at the rallies

The Association of Iranian Jews also in their statement announced that the Jewish community in Iran would, in response to the command issued by the Islamic revolution leader, Ayatollah Khamene'i for everyone to participate in the Qods Day rally on the last Friday of the fasting of Ramadhan, take part in the demonstrations.

"We Iranian Jews by voicing our readiness to attend the Qods Day rallies want to let all people in the world know and further divulge to the world forums of our strong opposition to the persecution and oppression of the Palestinian people," read the statement.

Iran: Mine To Double Production To Boost Steel Output

LD1302203796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] To increase the country's steel production to 10 million tonnes, which is one of the objectives of the second development plan, the Economic Council has agreed that the Gol-e Gohar Mine [in the southeastern province of Kerman] can double its iron ore production.

The managing director of the Gol-e Gohar Mining and Industrial Company announced this today saying: The implementation of projects to develop and expand the Gol-e Gohar mines will start in early 1997.

He added that within 30 months, the production of concentrated iron would increase from the present level of 2.5 million tonnes per year to 5 million tonnes per year.

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Announcing that the [nearby] Chador-Malu Mine will also become operational next [Persian] year, he said: With the expansion of the Gol-e Gohar Mine and the future exploitation of the Chador-Malu Mine, the Islamic Republic of Iran will be able to export iron ore.

Pakistan

Pakistan: UK's Expulsion of Worker for 'Security' Threat Noted

BK1402053396 Islamabad THE NATION in English 13 Feb 96 pp 1, 15

[Report by Ishtiaq Ahmad]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Britain on Monday ordered the deportation of one employee of the Pakistan High Commission [HC] in London, Muhammad Saleem, accusing him of trying to procure equipment for Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme.

When asked for clarification, the Foreign Office spokesman here said that Saleem was a Pakistani who had been living in Britain for the last 12 years, and was trying to get British nationality. He was occupying only a "clerical" position in the High Commission.

"We are not aware what sort of charges have been framed against him. But we stick to our principled nuclear stand, that Pakistan's nuclear programme is solely for peaceful purposes," the spokesman told THE NATION. The news about Mr Saleem's deportation was broadcast both by the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Voice of America. It was first revealed by British eveninger The Evening Standard on Monday. According to information made available to this newspaper from various sources, the Pak [Pakistan] HC employee's deportation has been justified by the British Home Office on the ground that his presence in Britain was "not conducive to the public good," and that it was a threat to the British "national security" because of his involvement in the "proliferation of weapons of mass destruction."

The main charge against Mr. Saleem, which is said to have been framed only after the British authorities found out some evidence against him, is that he was trying to acquire highly sophisticated and sensitive equipment for nuclear weapons.

Earlier this month, the Swedish newspaper Svenska Daghledet said British Customs had last year seized a shipment of Swedish laser devices used in making nuclear weapons that had been suspected of being Pakistani.

According to the Evening Standard, the British authorities had also foiled three such attempts by Pakistani nationals for smuggling the nuclear-related technology from Britain. In October 1990 also, one Pakistani diplomat, Ahmad Jamil, was expelled, though quietly, from Britain for the same reason Mr. Saleem has been. Ahmad was said to be a close associate of nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan.

Last week, a report in the US newspaper Washington Times alleged that China had supplied Pakistan with the nuclear weapons manufacturing device called ring magnets. Pakistan has contradicted the Times report.

In the post-Cold War period, South Asia has been the focus of the Western world's anti-nuclear proliferation outlook, especially that of the United States, Germany and Britain. Last December, New York Times carried a special report on India's nuclear pursuits. The report, based on American reconnaissance satellite observations alleged that India was planning to conduct a second nuclear explosion at Pokhran in Rajhistan. Later, the US State Department had expressed concern over Indian nuclear activities.

Insofar as the Western propaganda against Pakistan's nuclear weapons activities is concerned, it was in 1987 that the country was for the first time blamed by the West at large of being involved in smuggling the nuclear weapons related equipment and material from the Western countries. One Canadian nationalities for allegedly trying to smuggle the Kryton switches which are a part of the nuclear device.

APP adds: The High Commission for Pakistan in London on Monday clarified that no member of the diplomatic staff of the Mission has been expelled as alleged by a local newspaper.

The evening newspaper Evening Standard ran a story on Monday claiming that Britain is to expel a Pakistani diplomat in "protest at persistent attempts by Islmabad to involve Britain in the supply of equipment for Pakistan's atomic weapons programme".

A Foreign Office Spokesman when contacted said that Muhammad Salim, member of a locally engaged staff, and not a diplomat has been served notice to leave the country within two weeks as his "presence is not conducive for public good". When asked about the newspaper report he said it was "reasonably" correct.

A Home Office spokesman said that Home Secretary on Monday directed to give notice of intention to deport Mr. Muhammad Salim on the ground that his presence is not conducive to public good. He has been allowed 14 days to appeal against the order to three standing Special Advisors. A Pakistan High Commission Press release issued here on Monday said "in reference to the Evening Standard's (February 12) story "UK to expel diplomat over bomb shipments" the High Commission

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for Pakistan wishes to clarify that no member of the diplomatic staff of the Mission has been expelled.

Pakistan Denies Diplomat Expelled From UK

BK1302150096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has vehemently denied reports in British media that a Pakistani diplomat in its high commission in London has been expelled. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that no Pakistani diplomat had been expelled or deported and all such reports are misleading. The spokesman said even as a non-diplomatic functionary, the person reported, Mohammad Saleem, had not been posted from Pakistan. He had been living in the United Kingdom for about 12 years.

The spokesman also said that the Government of Pakistan was not aware of the specific charges against Mohammad Saleem. As for the section of the media attributing this to Pakistan's nuclear program, the spokesman reiterated that Pakistan's nuclear program was entirely peaceful and posed no threat to anybody. He pointed out that this was in sharp contrast to the Indian nuclear program. India has just made preparations for conducting a second nuclear test, has tested a medium-range nuclear capable Prithvi missile with ability to hit all Pakistani cities, and has shifted her position in the Comprehensive Test Ban Negotiations at the disarmament conference in Geneva.

Pakistan: Editorial Calls UK's Expulsion of Worker 'Contrived'

BK1402063296 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 14 Feb 96 p 7

[Editorial: "More Than an Expulsion"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistanis have a reputation of believing in conspiracies. But there are times when they have reasons for doing so. The expulsion of a staffer from Pakistan's High Commission [HC] in Britain on the charge that he was trying to procure nuclear-weapons-related material in a bid to smuggle it to Pakistan, is reason enough to believe that a conspiracy is afoot. The expulsion has come close on the heels of the old controversy that is raging afresh in the United States about the alleged Chinese transfer of M-11 related technology to Pakistan. Using the controversy as a peg, the anti-Pakistan lobby is working overtime to get those sanctions slapped on Pakistan that are reserved for nuclear rogue states. The expulsion is a god-send for Washington's Pakistan bashers who will hold this up as another "proof" of the dangerous mischief this small Muslim state is up to. The timing of the whole event is obviously contrived and not coincidental.

This is not something new for Pakistan. In the past when the fear of the Islamic bomb was strong in the West, and Pakistan's nuclear programme was an obvious target of their exaggerated reactions, it was commonplace for Western governments to catch Pakistani citizens on the suspicion of pilfering nuclear technology. Although rarely were such charges proven right, these were used to paint Pakistan's nuclear programme in the dark colour of a threat to regional and global peace. This event seems no different in its intentions. It is geared to revive hysteria against Pakistan's nuclear power and to level the ground for a bigger assault on its stand that it will not change its nuclear policy as long as Delhi does not do so.

For the Indians the expulsion is beautifully timed. Just when their nuclear follies and bravado had begun to get them international censure, they have an issue to distract and deflect world opinion. Also, as it has in the past, Delhi will use this as an excuse to shore up its crumbling argument that Pakistan poses a security threat to it which it can only counter by building its nuclear muscle. It is hard to see any other logic in the expulsion, the swiftness with which it has been carried out and the publicity that it has been given, than that it is just another of the many tactics that will be applied to put Pakistan on the nuclear defensive.

Pakistan Rejects Reports on Meetings by Afghan Leaders

BK1402023396 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has rejected press reports about the congregation of Afghan leaders in Pakistan, calling them misleading and speculative. In a statement in Islamabad last night, the spokesman said these reports have created the wrong impression about the Afghan leaders' visit and the purpose of their talks. He said the fact is that the leaders of all Afghan factions have visited Pakistan, and on several occasions they have held meetings in Pakistan. Therefore, the presence of Afghan leaders in Islamabad, the meetings among Afghan leaders, or their meetings with Pakistani leaders is nothing unusual.

The spokesman added that during the meetings with Afghan leaders — either at the individual or group level — Pakistan will always strive to persuade them to seek a solution to the Afghan issue that is acceptable to the Afghan people and capable of establishing durable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

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Pakistan: Ex-Intelligence Chief Favors Return of Afghan King

MM1302130396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan: "Former Pakistan Intelligence Chief Says: Islamabad Favors Return of Afghan King"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad — Retired General Hamid Gul, former chief of Pakistani military intelligence, has indicated that there are Pakistani attempts to forge an alliance between the Afghan Taleban movement and the Uzbek militias, led by Gen. 'Abdol Rashid Dostam (a former communist), in order to topple the regime of Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani in preparation for reinstating former Afghan King Mohammad Zahir Shah. Hamid Gul spoke to AL-HAYAH following his talks with Golboddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hezb-e Eslami, in Rawalpindi, near Islamabad the day before yesterday, Sunday [11 February]. The former chief of Pakistani military intelligence, who played a prominent role in the Afghan jihad, stressed that the issue of the Pakistani Government's support for the return of the former king (he has been living in exile since 1973) "is possible and not just rumors, since Pakistan has discovered that it no longer enjoys credibility among mojahedin leaders as was the case in the past."

In his statement to AL-HAYAH Hamid pointed out that there is increasing concern in Islamabad over a possible overt confrontation between Taleban fighters, who are supported by Pakistan, and the Iranian forces supporting the Rabbani regime.

Pakistan: Babar on Deportation of 'Afghan Arabs'

MM0902153496 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 9 Feb 96 pp 1,4

[Report on interview with Pakistani Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar by Faruq 'Umar in Islamabad on 8 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad — Pakistani Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar has said that the Pakistani authorities will not allow any of the so-called "Arab Afghans" to reside illegally on their territory. He added that "the Arabs who came to participate in the Afghan war will be deported from Pakistan shortly." In an interview yesterday with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in his office in the Pakistani parliament building, he said: "Our operations continue against the Afghan Arabs residing illegally."

Babar, a former general in the army, touched on the two issues facing the Pakistani security organs in their campaign against the Afghan Arabs residing illegally in Pakistan, namely:

— These Arabs who came to participate in the Afghan war have now intermixed with Pakistani society. They now wear Pakistani national costume and behave like Pakistani citizens. Consequently, it is difficult to identify them among ordinary people.

— Every time a campaign is launched against them, they cross the border into Afghanistan, to escape from the deportation campaign.

Babar added, however: "But we arrest them when they return to Pakistan and deport them to their state of origin." He explained that the Pakistani authorities have so far deported 40 Arab citizens who were residing in the country illegally.

He pointed out that an extradition agreement between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan is currently being discussed, stressing that his country is cooperating effectively with all the world's states, including Saudi Arabia, in confronting terrorism.

On whether there is any time limit on deporting those residing illegally in Pakistan, Babar said that a time frame cannot be specified "but we are constantly working against these people."

He explained that the biggest problem facing Pakistan is that these Afghan Arabs have intermingled with Pakistani society, saying: "We intend, however, to detain them and deport them."

He said that he did not know the total number of Arabs living illegally in Pakistan.

In response to a question, he denied the involvement of Sudanese individuals in the Egyptian Embassy blast. He told AL-SHARQ AL- AWSAT that the Pakistani security organs have completed their investigations of the embassy blast and know the identity of the suicide bombers — the first, who drove the car inside the embassy compound, and the second, who was killed at the embassy gate. He stressed that the Egyptian Embassy blast has nothing to do with Pakistan's internal situation.

He pointed out that investigations continue with regard to those who planned and financed the crime.

Pakistan: Sindhi Leader Reportedly Threatens 'Secession'

BK1202130896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Pakistan, the chairman of the Sindhi nationalist party, Jeay Sindh, has sharply

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criticized the federal government for discriminating against Sindhis in the name of Islam and Pakistan. In a recent interview, Dr. Qadir Magsi said Sindh is impoverished today because its wealth from oil, gas, granite, coal, and the sea port is being siphoned off by Islamabad. He said the successive governments have neglected the industrial sector, spending most of development budget on defense forces. He also alleged that the Sindhis were excluded from all major institutions. He said Sindhis would demand the right of secession if their national and political rights are not recognized.

Pakistan: MQM Activists Among 5 Killed in Karachi Violence

BK1402094296 Hong Kong AFP in English 0928 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Feb 14 (AFP) — Five people, including two activists of the opposition Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), were killed in the strife-torn Pakistani commercial capital Karachi during the past 24 hours, police and hospital officials said Wednesday.

One MQM activist was killed Wednesday in an early-morning gunbattle with police, while the bullet-riddled body of a man was recovered in the city centre, police said.

Police said MQM militant Mohammad Qutubuddin was killed during an exchange of gunfire with police, while his colleagues fled the scene.

Three people, including two from a MQM breakaway faction, the MQM-Haqiqi, were shot dead by a group of unidentified armed men in overnight violence elsewhere in the city.

The MQM, which represents Urdu-speaking migrants who came from India after the subcontinent's partition in 1947, accuses the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of killing its activists in police custody.

The authorities deny the charge, saying that the activists have been killed in gunbattles.

The government holds the MQM responsible for much of the violence in the city, where more than 2,000 people have been killed since January 1995. The MQM denies the charge and blames the unrest on the government's anti-Mohajir policy.

Pakistan: 'Prominent' Nuclear Scientist Granted Service Extension

BK1302125396 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 11 Feb 96 pp 1, 11

["OBSERVER report"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—The Government of Pakistan has granted the years extension in service to the legendary [nuclear] scientist of the country, Dr A Q Khan.

A source at the Prime Minister's Secretariat told Pakistan Observer that the decision to retain the prominent scientist in the service has been taken at the highest level in view of the important "task ahead". The source would not explain what other special assignment is being entrusted to him but Observer understands that the Government wants to utilise his talent for programmes designed to thwart threats to national security due to recent developments across the border.

Dr A Q Khan was nearing superannuation and was due to retire from the service in April, 1996. Earlier, there were reports that he has been given two years extension but the source confirmed that the extension is for three and not two years.

It may be mentioned that in formal circumstances, the Government, as per a policy decision does not grant extension to public servants and even if an extension is considered necessary in public interest it is normally for one or two years at the most. However, "Dr Qadeer has been granted three years extension in view of his extraordinary performance and outstanding services," the source further said.

Pakistan: 'Huge' Oil, Gas Reserves Discovered in Sindh

BK1102091896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The federal minister for petroleum and natural resources, Mr. Anwar Saifullah Khan, has said huge reserves of oil and gas have been discovered in Sindh and the government is making all out efforts for proper utilization of these reserves. Talking to newsmen in Mirpur Khas, he said the record 500,000 new gas connections have been provided to the people all over the country during the last 2 years. He said efforts are being made to provide connections in every nook and corner of the country on priority basis.

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Pakistan: Paper Urges Government To Sue To Recoup F-16 Funds

BK1002083396 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 8 Feb 96 p 10

[Editorial: "Recovering the Amount Paid for the F-16's — Suggestions To Go to a Court of Law"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan's U.S. legal consultants have advised Islamabad that if it goes to a U.S. court of law using a U.S. lawyer to recover the amount paid for the purchase of the F-16 aircraft, it will easily get its money back. Otherwise, if there is some delay in this matter, it will be difficult for President Clinton to honor his promise because of the elections that are around the corner in the United States and the intricacies inherent in the U.S. system.

Air Marshal Zulfiqar, Pakistan's former ambassador to the United States, has also advised the Pakistani Government to file suit against the U.S. Administration in a U.S. court of law for the return of the money paid for the purchase of the F-16 aircraft. In this connection, he cited an example. When the $300 million paid by Cuban President Fidel Castro for the procurement of defense equipment was blocked in a similar way, he filed suit against the U.S. Administration and without any delay got the money back. Therefore, Pakistan should follow the same path.

In response to these suggestions, Pakistan has maintained the stance that although it has not abandoned the idea of going to a court of law, it is waiting for the United States to fulfill its pledge to sell the aircraft to a third country and repay Pakistan. In our opinion, the continuing impasse in recovering the money from the United States reflects the fact that no third country is willing to purchase these aircraft at the moment. Therefore, against the backdrop of the upcoming U.S. elections and the intricacies inherent in the U.S. system, the government should not delay further in turning to a court of law.

Pakistan: Paper Urges Reviewing U.S. Ties

BK1102092096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 Feb 96 p 6

[Editorial: "U.S. Browning of Pakistan"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] How Brown was the Brown Amendment which was passed by the U.S. Congress to allow supply of $368 million worth of military equipment to Pakistan which has held up in the United States since September 1990 under what we believe was a black law named after Senator Pressler? The Brown Amendment was a follow-up action of the U.S. Government to deliver on U.S. President's promise of best effort to set right what he considered morally wrong. He had declared last year in the presence of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Washington that it was not in American sense fairplay to keep both money and equipment.

Late last month, President Clinton gave his assent to the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill to which the Brown Amendment was attached. It was thought that with the signing into law of this one time waiver from the infamous Pressler [law], the painstaking legislative process has come to an end and the equipment for which payments had already been made would now start arriving in Pakistan.

The Brown Amendment also allowed the U.S. businessmen to invest in Pakistan and receive Overseas Private investment Corruption (OPIC) loan guarantees and insurance coverage. Return to Pakistan of the sale proceeds of the stranded [word indistinct] have been promised [word indistinct] one-time waiver to Pressler Law. The U.S. action was taken as reflecting Washington's growing realisation of Pakistan's strategic importance. It was also interpreted as a token of U.S. displeasure over India's stance with regard to its nuclear programme and change in New Delhi's stand on signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

However, in the background of the latest press reports from the United States, these high hopes may turn out to be a bit premature, even false. The campaign in the U.S. print and electronic media alleging supply of nuclear technology by China to Pakistan seems to be gaining momentum. The press reports based on information leaked by the Central intelligence Agency (CIA) might have been calculated to neutralise the effects of the Brown Amendment. The U.S. Administration officials are now saying to newsmen that the Brown Amendment "does not compel the U.S. President to release military equipment to Pakistan. It simply gives him the authority to do so."

If the latest press reports from Washington are to be believed, the arranged "leaks" alleging that Pakistan received nuclear technology from China may be part of a more sinister plan because the implications of such allegations would be more serious and more wideranging than can be imagined right now.

Senator Larry Pressler has been quoted as saying that he was very much disturbed by the alleged sale of nuclear technology to Pakistan. It has been pointed out that if the press reports are taken to be true, a variety of U.S. restrictive laws would apply to Pakistan including the Glen Symington Amendment and the Nuclear Proliferation Act of 1994. Under these laws, the U.S. Government is obliged to take immediate action to

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suspend not only all bilateral U.S. assistance but also to block multilateral economic assistance to the guilty states.

In Pakistan's case, that would mean severely affecting the multi- donor assistance where the U.S. has great power and influence. The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also need U.S. support in order to undertake major economic assistance. The aid-to-Pakistan Consortium will be meeting in about two months time to discuss multi-donor assistance for the year 1996-97. The U.S. Executive Directors in these institutions are required under U.S. law to use voice and vote to oppose use of funds of international financial institutions to promote the acquisition of unsafeguarded special materials to non- nuclear states. These institutions, of course, do not directly fund military or nuclear programs but they provide assistance in foreign exchange which allows the recipient country to use its own resources of the hard currencies to purchase these materials and equipment. According to the U.S. laws, that has to stop in order to discourage, even cripple the developing countries. If such laws are applied against Pakistan for the alleged violations reported in the U.S. press, we may soon find ourselves under a much tighter squeeze than ever before.

Pakistan is going extra mile on practically every issue to support the United States. If despite such unqualified support and cooperation with the Americans, we cannot win a respite from the perpetual pressures which mar our economic progress and restrict our defence capability, it is time to review the whole range of our relationship with the United States.

We cannot go on waiting for small mercies and losing greatly to our competitors in the region. That would be suicidal.

Pakistan: Paper Reviews Foreign Minister's U.S. Trip

BK1302093696 Karachi DAWN in English 12 Feb 96 p 9

[Editorial: "What Did Sardar Asif Achieve?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At home it was billed as an official visit to Washington. International media had so much interest in the visit that the Pakistan embassy in Washington was swamped with media requests to meet the foreign minister [FM], second only to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's April visit last year. The press corps at the State Department demanded a special photo-op with the FM, a rare demand in itself. Yet it all ended with a whimper with the State Department finally adding insult to injury by calling it a private visit and not sending anyone even to say hello to the FM at the airport.

Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali was coming to discuss Afghanistan, it was initially announced in Islamabad but by then the ring-magnet controversy had not hit the U.S. media like a storm. Subsequent announcements by the official APP changed the emphasis from Afghanistan to nuclear non-proliferation first and the final press release issued by the Pakistan embassy downgraded Afghanistan to the second last of the eight paragraphs starting with "the two sides also discussed Afghanistan."

So what was Sardar Asif up to and why did he almost force himself on the Americans at a time when neither his counterpart Warren Christopher was in town, nor anyone else more important was ready or eager to receive him to discuss Afghanistan, or hear whatever else he wanted to say?

There are many theories circulating in the U.S. capital and the most plausible among them include:

Sardar Asif wanted to elevate his personal image and profile because he was feeling that in his on-going, bitter power struggle with the top bureaucrats in his ministry, he was getting left out and the impression that he was unfit to run the sensitive foreign affairs portfolio was getting widespread acceptance. So a successful, huge profile visit to Washington where he would get a lot of media attention and would be able to claim on return that he had fixed many problems, would help him get on top of the bureaucrats.

He had been sent by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in a visible sign of panic to ask the Americans to bail Pakistan out of a virtual box-hole, specially after France had indicated that the Mirage deal might not go through and the armed forces in Pakistan were fuming at the failure of the government to procure the desperately needed fighting power for the PAF [Pakistan Air Force].

He was dispatched by the PPP-PML(J) [Pakistan People's Party- Pakistan Muslim League (Junejo)] coalition partners to stir up the dormant profile of government-to-government relations, specially on the eve of a high profile visit by opposition leader Nawaz Sharif who was coming to address the prestigious Camegie Endowment think- tank which could provide Mr Sharif with an opportunity to have sneak meetings with U.S. Administration officials and explain to them that he was no fundamentalist nor a hawk on nuclear proliferation.

All these three goals might have been achieved had the foreign minister risen up to the occasion. It was certainly a test of his leadership in a crisis situation as the ring-magnet controversy had gripped Washington by the time

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his plane landed and, instantly, he had become the most sought-after foreign visitor by the usually indifferent U.S. electronic and print media.

Embassy insiders reveal that the ambassador and her diplomats were shocked at the number of journalists and media personalities requesting interviews who would in normal times never pay any attention to Pakistan. "It was the best time for us to oblige these media big-shots but the foreign minister had shut himself up," one diplomat said.

The press release issued by the embassy after his round of talks said more in between the lines about the failure of his visit than about the successes he might have achieved. It was clear from the press release that it was our FM who did all the talking and not much was said by the Americans. In any case they had agreed to listen to what the FM wanted to say.

Out of its eight paragraphs the first six referred to what the FM said or did. "The FM met so and so", "The FM discussed this and that", "The FM hoped...", "The FM denied...", "The FM apprised...", "The FM briefed the U.S. ...." and so on. The second last para referred to "the two sides discussed the situation in Afghanistan and expressed deep concern over the continuing conflict...". The longest para was the last which had hardly anything to do with the FM or his ministry. It was about a meeting with Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary and she was quoted as saying that she evinced interest in a gas project and conveyed U.S. interest in Pakistan's hydel-power sector.

So this official account thus told us that no other official "evinced interest" in any other thing that the FM had told them or neither Strobe Talbott nor Sandy Berger "conveyed U.S. interest" on anything that might have interested them. Apparently nothing did, otherwise the embassy press release would not have omitted it.

In fact the State Department spokesman who briefed the press corps two hours after the Talbott-Asif meeting had to face a barrage of questions and what emerged from his remarks was interesting. The spokesman clearly indicated that the denials by Sardar Asif about Pakistan not receiving any ring-magnets from China had not actually meant anything to the Americans who were still trying to determine whether or not a violation of the U.S. law had taken place and how to handle it.

But whether the officials were convinced or not is another matter. The American public and opinion makers are definitely not. And it was here that the FM failed particularly to do his duty of pleading Pakistan's case. Congress is in a bad mood and he should have stayed on in Washington to meet some of the important players on the Hill who might now try to block arms sale to Pakistan. This was the basic duty of Sardar Asif and he failed to meet this challenge.

The embassy officials say they had no request from Islamabad to arrange any meeting on the Hill, although it can be argued that when the ring-magnet controversy broke on Feb 5, the embassy and the Foreign Office had three full days before the FM left Islamabad to anticipate the crisis and decide a course of action.

But given the state of affairs in the Foreign Office where the secretary is believed to be, not on speaking terms with his minister and ambassadors abroad are not briefed for days and weeks, it was asking too much to respond to a developing situation so quickly.

Now if Congress presses into action and forces the administration to block the arms sale under the Brown Amendment, both the embassy and the Foreign Office will have to share the blame.

If the Americans have whispered in the ears of the FM that Pakistan should not fear any sanctions, that is not a matter of record but Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali did tell some of the State Department reporters who got him while he was rushing out of the building: "Talbott had not mentioned possible U.S. sanctions against Pakistan."

If that was very reassuring for the FM to disclose to reporters, it was not reassuring enough to be included in the official press release.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Troops Destroy LTTE Arms Flotilla

BK1402115696 Hong Kong AFP in English 1136 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Feb 14 (AFP) — Sri Lanka ordered the indefinite closure of schools Wednesday amid fears of Tamil guerrilla reprisals as security forces destroyed a fleet of rebel boats and an explosives cargo, officials said.

Schools will remain closed from Thursday and parents and teaching staff will be asked to strengthen security arrangements and decide on a date to re-open on a case-by-case basis, a government official said.

He said the decision was taken following fears expressed by parents that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) may target students to provoke a backlash against members of the minority Tamil community.

The government took similar action in November and closed schools for two months as the military conducted their biggest ever ground offensive to capture the

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LTTE's main stronghold of Jaffna in the north of the country.

Military analysts said the government could be gearing up for another offensive, this time to secure a land route to the Jaffna peninsula which is currently supplied mainly by air and sea.

The government's latest action followed a joint air force and navy attack that destroyed a medium-size cargo ship of the LTTE as well as five smaller boats that were ferrying explosives to the shore.

Defence officials said a Puccara ground attack plane was hit by rebel fire but managed to land at a nearby air field after the pre-dawn fire fight off the coast of Alampil in the northeast of the country.

The air force deployed six planes, including an Mi-24 helicopter gunship, for the attack, officials said.

"The Sri Lankan navy and the air force took action to destroy this ship after giving due warning. A secondary explosion was also observed during this action. The air force took further action to destroy the smaller boats," a brief Defence Ministry statement said.

The night sky was lit up for several hours by the fire onboard the cargo vessel which eventually sank, defence sources said. It was not clear from where the Tiger ship had originated.

On the other side of the island, a powerful blast went off and police said it could have been onboard a boat or a ship off Negombo, 30 kilometres (18 miles) north of here. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Police recently detected a Tamil guerrilla boat with about 600 kilos (1,320 pounds) of explosives at Chilaw, further north of Negombo.

The guerrillas are also known to operate a fleet of ships registered in the names of dummy companies.

Wednesday's attack came amid tension in the northeastern region following a spate of renewed LTTE attacks that led to the deaths of some 40 people in the northeastern district of Trincomalee since Sunday.

Local officials said an army unit ran amok and killed about 30 villagers after LTTE guerrillas ambushed and killed two soldiers in the coastal district on Sunday.

After the massacre, the Tigers struck again and killed seven more security personnel and a politician from the Trincomalee town council, officials said adding that the latest wave of violence has triggered tension.

A Defence Ministry statement said that separate police and military police investigations have been launched. "There will be no attempt to cover up," a senior defence officer said. "Those who are guilty will be punished severely."

The LTTE which is fighting for independence in the island's northeast is reported to have arranged for the purchase of 30 tonnes of military supplies, including plastic explosives a few months ago.

In January 1993, an LTTE arms ship, the MV Ahad, was intercepted by the Indian navy together with a huge quantity of arms and ammunition off Sri Lanka's northern coast.

Sri Lanka: Powerful Blast Rocks Northwest Coast

BK1402102696 Hong Kong AFP in English 1009 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Feb 14 (AFP) — A powerful explosion was heard off the north-west coast of Sri Lanka Wednesday, police said, adding that the blast appeared to have been on board a boat or ship.

The explosion was heard in the town of Negombo, 30 kilometers (19 miles) north of the capital Colombo, a police officer said by telephone.

"We suspect that it was at sea," the officer said. "We have sent a party out. We are certain that it was not on land."

Police recently detected a Tamil guerrilla boat with about 600 kilos (1,320 pounds) of explosives at Chilaw, further north of Negombo.

Sri Lanka: Security Forces Kill 5 LTTE Terrorists

BK1302132496 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At least five LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists have been killed in confrontations with the security forces over the weekend. Troops engaged an LTTE boat which was crossing the Mahaweli River with small arms fire at Rakkuli in the Trincomalee District on Sunday evening. The boat was completely destroyed and at least three Tigers were killed. The body of one terrorist was subsequently recovered. The security forces suffered no casualties.

The operational headquarters of the Defense Ministry also reports that two soldiers were killed when their foot patrol was ambushed at Kiliveddi in the Trincomalee District on Sunday. Troops retaliated causing casualties among the terrorists. A 12-year-old child was also killed by terrorist fire. Meanwhile, the Navy engaged three Tiger boats proceeding towards Poovarasantivu island off the Jaffna Peninsula on Sunday. The occupants

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abandoned their boat and headed for the island. The Navy has confirmed that at least two terrorists were killed. The operational headquarters say that fuel and other equipment were recovered from the scene of the confrontation.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Details Offensive in Batticaloa

BK1302134696 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A contingent of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] launched a surprise attack on Sri Lankan troops, who were on patrol duty at Vantarumulai in the Batticaloa district yesterday morning. One soldier was killed and three others injured in this attack. Freedom fighter Second Lieutenant Kamalan, alias Kandasamy Rattinababu, belonging to Kokkuvil in Batticaloa, embraced martyrdom in a confrontation with Sri Lankan troops at Mylambavelly in the Batticaloa district last Tuesday.

A special prayer was organized at Valvai Muthumariamman temple at 0600 on 9 February. The temple trustee announced that this prayer was being held for the well-being of the freedom fighters of Tamil Eelam and the displaced people who are facing many hardships.

Following the imposition of tough measures by Sri Lankan troops, a number of travelers passing through Tandikkulam have been returning to their homes after suspending their itinerary. At the same time, most of the civilians who went to Vavuniya city have been arrested by the military and kept under detention. All the people — young and old — coming to the north from Colombo are subjected to torture by the troops.

The medicines dispatched to Kilinochchi Hospital were seized by Sri Lankan troops for their own use. Although the medicines were brought with the permission of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Health, they were robbed by the troops. It may be recalled that a few antinational gangs are operating with the troops in Vavuniya.

Seventeen trucks carrying essential goods to the north have been impounded by the military at Vavuniya. Though these trucks have been cleared by the Ministry of Defense, they have been impounded by the troops deployed in Vavuniya.

It has been announced that all the schools in Vadamarachchi, Thenmarachchi, and Wanni will reopen on 1 March. It may be recalled that all the schools in the north remain closed as a result of Operation Sun Rays [Rivikirana] carried out by the Sri Lankan military.

The thirst of the LTTE is the motherland of Tamil Eelam.

Sri Lanka: Arrests Made After Discovery of Truck Bomb

BK1402040796 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 14 Feb 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The driver of the lorry which was found parked in the temple premises at Kotahena on Monday with 150 kgs of explosives has been arrested. Six others have also been taken into custody. They are Siddharthan, the broker who helped to park the lorry at temple premises, the original owner of the lorry from Kahawatte and four others from Kotahena area, including two women. All suspects now in custody are natives of Jaffna.

The driver of the lorry was arrested jointly by the CID [Criminal Investigation Department] and Army in Vavuniya following a police alert immediately after the detection of the lorry with explosives at Kotahena.

According to reports the lorry in question had been bought at an auction in Divulapitiya in 1992, by a Kahawatte resident. However, after some time the Kahawatte resident had returned the lorry to the auction owner since he was unable to pay back his finance instalments on the lorry. Thereafter it had been bought by a Tamil Pettah businessman. Another police team has now been despatched to investigate this aspect.

The explosives comprising twelve packages and each weighing 12.5 kgs were packed in metal casings in the tank measuring five feet in length and nearly two feet in width.

The detection was made on a tip off to the Kotahena Police by the public who had noticed that the lorry had been parked at the temple premises for over three weeks.

Police said that a Tamil, living in the area, had helped in getting the vehicle parked in the temple premises and are on the lookout for him.

SSP [Senior Superintendent of Police] (CID) Bandula Wickramasinghe said that the lorry which was driven to the premises on January 20, had been lying alongside a few other lorries at the same location.

It was revealed that the late venerable Maligawatte Wimalananda Thera, chief incumbent of the temple called Sama Vihara used to charge Rs [rupees] 450 a month, for each lorry parked at the temple premises.

While the other lorries made their routine trips, this lorry continued to remain stationary. This aroused the

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suspicion of the public, who brought this to the notice of the Police.

Wickramasinghe said that the explosives were so packed that only the connecting wires had to be fixed onto the dashboard to activate the explosives.

Police are of the view that the lorry was on a mission of destruction elsewhere, and the temple premises merely served as a transit point.

Balakumaran, the driver of the lorry which was found parked in the temple premises at Kotahena on Monday with 150 kgs of explosives has been arrested.

He was arrested jointly by a team from the CID and Army in Vavuniya following a police alert immediately after the detection of the lorry with explosives at Kotahena.

According to Balakumaran, the lorry belonged to a mudalali [shop owner] from Kilinochchi. A woman described as the wife of the mudalali has also been taken into custody. She is said to have been residing in Vavuniya.

Police also took into custody a three-wheeler which is said to have been used by Balakumaran and which had been gifted to him by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam].

Eleven others have also been taken into custody, all natives of Jaffna. Among them are Siddharthan, the broker who helped to park the lorry at temple premises and the original owner of the lorry from Kahawatte.

IGP [Inspector General of Police] W.B. Rajaguru Tuesday highly commended the brave and vigilant acts of the public in arresting and producing the two LTTE terrorist suspects involved in the bomb blast of the Central Bank and other buildings in Fort on January 31, soon after the incident which led to solving the mysterious crime and the personnel involved in it.

"While thanking them, the IGP, has solicited the help of the public in co-operating with the Police in combating the anti-social elements in the future in this manner," the release said.

Sri Lanka: Minister Vows To 'Eliminate' LTTE, Leader

BK1402021396 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 14 Feb 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Deputy Defence Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte solemnly promised on Monday to eliminate the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and its leader Prabhakaran who is known to be the most despicable criminal in the world.

"We should be proud of the people for their patience in the face of such dastardly acts of crime against harmless and innocent civilians in the South, by these brutal terrorists. I appeal to the people to be calm and alert and assist the authorities to destroy these criminals once and for all. On behalf of President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga. I hold out this solemn promise" he said.

General Ratwatte gave this assurance to the nation when he addressed a large gathering at the Defence Ministry after receiving public donations to the National Defence Fund [NDF], amounting to nearly one million rupees [Rs].

"By killing innocent people with the bomb blasts in the South, the terrorists expect to provoke the people and have a backlash. We should be thankful to the people for not getting provoked in the face of brutal murder by the LTTE terrorists. We will eliminate them swiftly and steadily. We are going ahead with our original plans to usher in peace again to this country, and we are committed to that holy task," he told the gathering.

Thanking the donors for their contributions he said "With these contributions to the National Defence Fund you have become partners in this holy task. This money will be well used on all who are on the battlefield and in hospitals. Rs. 14 million from the fund was spent recently to construct an operating theatre at the military hospital. Those who need foreign medical treatment are being sent abroad."

Thanking on behalf of the security forces and the police, General Ratwatte said that the heroic members of the security forces who are engaged in the holy task of defending the integrity and the sovereignty of our motherland would appreciate the donations people make to the NDF.

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